

**Exploring educators' perceptions of the challenges facing
second-language learners within the Foundation Phase at
ex-Model C schools in Pietermaritzburg**

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DECLARATION

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I, *Mayure Padayachee*, declare that:

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Mayure Padayachee

Supervisor: Ms Phindile Mayaba

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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my parents, Deenadhayalan and Geraldene Cheryl Padayachee.

For their infinite love, support and patience throughout my studies.

And more importantly, for their absolute faith in me.

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ABSTRACT

The South African inclusive education system seems to present with significant challenges. More specifically it appears to require interventions that are often beyond the speciality of educators and the capacity of schools. This study investigated educators' perceptions of the challenges facing second-language learners in the Foundation Phase of ex-Model C schools. Moreover it employed a qualitative research design, using a semi-structured interview schedule, to explore this topic. Six Foundation Phase educators, who were female and of varied age and race, were recruited from selected ex-Model C schools in the Pietermaritzburg area. The findings of their individual interviews were analysed using thematic analysis and were presented alongside six central themes that emerged. The research findings highlighted concepts such as the post-apartheid development of ex-Model C schools, the significance of multiculturalism in English medium schools, language as a barrier to teaching and learning, teaching and assessment amongst linguistically diverse learners and the commonly implemented learner support strategies in ex-Model C schools in Pietermaritzburg.

This study promotes the need to develop a multicultural model of education within ex-Model C schools. More specifically it recommends that future policy development and practice must provide educators with the appropriate training for the multicultural context, to ensure that they are adequately equipped to address issues of diversity; particularly in relation to culture and language. In addition, this study encourages the implementation of onsite learner support services and the development of an inter-disciplinary approach to education, particularly in ex-Model C schools. Lastly this study emphasises the need for schools to provide the opportunity for early intervention and appropriate support for all learners, including second-language learners who may experience language barriers to learning.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Research Problem

Since the abolishment of apartheid laws, the South African government has focused on developing an education system that acknowledges and accommodates for the diversity of all learners in terms of race, class, language, gender, ethnicity and religion (Broom, 2004; Carrim, 2013; de Clercq, 1997; Lazarus, Daniels & Engelbrecht, 2007; Naidoo & Muthukrishna, 2014; Probyn, 2006).

The current learner population of ex-Model C schools is reflective of the multicultural context of South Africa (Carrim, 2013; Donald, Lazarus & Moolla, 2014; Probyn, 2006; Vandeyar & Amin, 2014). More specifically within the context of Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal over 80% of the population are isiZulu mother-tongue speakers (Statistics South Africa [StatsSA], 2011), some of whom attend ex-Model C schools where the medium of instruction is English.

Lev Vygotsky proposed that semantics become internalized speech, which ultimately creates mental functions that include thoughts and cognitive schemas (Donald et al., 2014; Lillemyr, Sobstad, Marder & Flowerday, 2011; Richter & Dawes, 2008; Shaffer & Kipp, 2007; Vygotsky, 1978). Specifically within the Foundation Phase of schooling, language is extensively used as the primary tool for learning and teaching. As a result, English Language Proficiency (ELP) can be regarded as a critical barrier to learning for second-language (L2) speakers. More specifically they may be restricted in their language competency when compared to their English-speaking peers particularly within the context of English medium schools (Ntombela & Mhlongo, 2010). Research has shown that a lower level of ELP amongst L2 speakers has ultimately influenced their academic development and performance in formal learning and assessment tasks (Jong & Harper, 2005; Paradis, Kirova & Dachyshyn, 2009; Wium, 2015).

Meeting the challenges of linguistic diversity within South African classrooms is a complex matter that is ultimately left to the responsibility of educators (Bornman & Donohue, 2013; Moonsamy & Kathard, 2015; Ntombela & Mhlongo, 2010). The current education system demands that educators should be able to identify all learners

who experience language barriers to learning and that schools should assist them by suitably accommodating for their specific learning needs (Donald et al., 2014; Lazarus et al., 2007; Nkomo, Chisholm & McKinney, 2004; Walton, Bekker & Thompson, 2015).

These expectations however, are challenging and require learner support strategies that are often beyond the speciality of educators and the capacity of schools (Donald et al., 2014; Mohangi, 2015; Naidoo & Muthukrishna, 2014; O'Connor & Geiger, 2009). This presents the dilemma which drives this research study and begins to illustrate the research problem which will be further discussed in the following section.

1.2 The Research Problem

This study aimed to explore educators' perceptions of the challenges facing L2 learners in ex-Model C schools in Pietermaritzburg. More specifically the research problem which underpins this study stems from the South African literature which suggests that ex-Model C schools have become increasingly diverse both linguistically, racially and culturally since the end of apartheid (Pluddemann, 1999; Vandeyar & Amin, 2014). Moreover as a result of the increasing number of non-White learners in ex-Model C schools, it has been further identified that many learners are now learning and being taught in a language that is not their home language (Broom, 2004; Carrim, 2013).

Within the present South African education context which promotes inclusivity, ex-Model C classrooms are typically considered as being multicultural, multilingual and multiracial. This in turn, presents educational challenges for learners and educators alike (Vandeyar & Amin, 2014). More specifically these challenges may be related to issues of language barriers to teaching and learning, difficulties with developing appropriate assessment techniques, ensuring effective teaching methods and the overall management of classroom diversity. Furthermore, South African literature shows that L2 learners hold a majority status in ex-Model C schools and may therefore require appropriate learner support when it comes to language barriers to learning within an English medium educational context (Carrim, 2013; Navsaria, Pascoe & Kathard, 2011; Pluddemann, 1999; Probyn, 2006; Soudien, 2010).

As a result of the broad expectations in the current South African education system, there is a need to examine the challenges that may be facing L2 learners within ex-Model C schools. Additionally, there is a need to investigate the manner in which these particular issues are being addressed (Bornman & Donohue, 2013; Moonsamy & Kathard, 2015; Ntombela & Mhlongo, 2010). The practical implications of the recently adopted inclusive education approach are important to consider and therefore leads to an exploration of the relevance and appropriateness of this framework within the South African context (Donald et al., 2014; Mohangi, 2015; Naidoo & Muthukrishna, 2014; O'Connor & Geiger, 2009).

The section below will outline the aim and rationale of this study in relation to the research problem.

1.3 Aim and Rationale

1.3.1 The aim of the study

This study explored educators' perceptions of the challenges facing L2 learners in the Foundation Phase of ex-Model C schools within the Pietermaritzburg area. The study had several aims that link to the previously discussed research problem.

Firstly, this study examined multiculturalism within the context of ex-Model C schooling and the effects it may have on the learning and teaching of a L2 learner. Secondly, the study also intended to develop a better understanding of the educators' professional challenges as well as the circumstances surrounding language barriers to learning amongst L2 learners who attend ex-Model C schools in the Pietermaritzburg area.

Thirdly, the study also aimed to explore the progress made within the post-apartheid education system which is now considered a diverse, inclusive context particularly in ex-Model C schools (Pluddemann, 1999; Ntuli, 1998; Vandeyar & Amin, 2014). Finally this study aimed to investigate the current learner support available in ex-Model C schools and to further examine the effectiveness of past academic recommendations in the present education system (Ntuli, 1998).

1.3.2 The rationale of the study

The rationale behind this study lies in developing a further understanding of the inclusive education system in South Africa. Furthermore, it focuses on multiculturalism within this context with a specific interest in linguistic diversity. This study also intends to explore educators' perceptions of the challenges facing L2 learners within the Foundation Phase of education, as this area has been minimally researched within the context of KwaZulu-Natal. The findings of this study therefore hopes to ascertain the experiences of Foundation Phase educators in selected of ex-Model C schools in Pietermaritzburg and thereafter address the gap that has been identified in the existing South African literature.

This study further intends to inform educators, school management teams and possibly the Department of Education of any vital matters that may arise in this study. This may include the experiences of L2 learners who experience barriers to learning, as well as highlight their specific needs in order to cope with the demands of an inclusive educational context. The study also sought to make recommendations for both policy and practice in the South African education system and for future research within or surrounding the current research topic.

This study had five major research objectives which are in line with five main research questions, as presented in the sections below.

1.4 Research Objectives

The objectives of this study were:

- i. To explore the challenges facing L2 learners within the Foundation Phase of education and highlight the perceptions of the educators who are responsible for their education.
- ii. To investigate the perceived needs of L2 learners by presenting suggestions of how these learners could possibly be assisted to learn and reach their optimal level of academic performance.
- iii. To explore a difference in participation amongst L2 learners in the learning process as compared to their English-speaking peers, within the context of multicultural schooling.

- iv. To establish how language may be considered a barrier to learning amongst L2 learners in ex-Model C schools.
- v. To identify the current learner support strategies that are being implemented in ex-Model C schools to address any language challenges faced by L2 learners.

1.5 Research Questions

The research addressed the following questions:

- i. What possible problems does multiculturalism present for a L2 child within the context of an ex-Model C school, which is driven by Western ideologies?
- ii. Is there a difference in participation amongst L2 learners in the learning process as compared to their English-speaking peers?
- iii. In what way is language considered a barrier to learning amongst L2 learners in ex-Model C schools?
- iv. What are the perceptions and experiences of educators within ex-Model C schools in relation to language diversity and its effects on teaching methods, subject content, assessment techniques and classroom management?
- v. What current measures are being put in place to address any language challenges faced by L2 learners?

1.6 Research Methodology

The following section provides a brief account of the research methodology used in this study. A detailed discussion of the methodology undertaken will be presented in Chapter 3.

1.6.1 Research design

A qualitative research design was used for this study in order to explore the educators' perceptions of the challenges facing L2 learners in ex-Model C schools within the Pietermaritzburg area.

1.6.2 Sampling

The intended population for this study were qualified Foundation Phase educators, over the age of 18 years, who were mentally and legally competent (Durrheim, 2006). The recruitment of participants was made on the basis of availability. Primarily due to the poor response of the intended sample group, the researcher had to snowball sample

outside of this specific group (Durrheim, 2006; Miles & Huberman, 1994). Six participants were recruited by means of convenience sampling although the study also had elements of purposive and snowball sampling.

1.6.3 Data Collection

The study was conducted through a semi-structured interview which allowed for descriptive, lengthy and interactive discussions of the research topic. All ethical issues, including informed consent and confidentiality, were comprehensively explained to the participants (Strydom, 2011).

1.6.4 Data Analysis

The data analysis of this particular study took the form of thematic analysis of the transcribed data from the interview process (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Terre Blanche et al., 2006b). This was achieved through the following steps: familiarisation and immersion with the transcripts and field notes, inducing themes that emerged from the data, coding by classifying and relating it to the purpose of the study, elaboration, which is further coding and analysis and lastly interpretation and checking which is the final stage of reflection and consolidation (Terre Blanche et al., 2006b).

The following section will provide a list which serves to define the terms commonly used within this study.

1.7 Definition of Terms

Barriers to learning: Circumstances that may impede an individual's learning. These factors may be in direct relation to the learner, their school or the broader educational context (Donald et al., 2014; Swart & Pettipher, 2005).

Educator: A person who provides instruction or education; a teacher (Vandeyar, 2014).

Ex-Model C School: South African public schools previously reserved for White learners during the apartheid era (Monyai, 2010; Navsaria et al., 2011; Ntuli, 1998; Vandeyar, 2014).

Foundation Phase of Education: The first stage of education in the South African education system which includes Grade R to Grade 3 (DoE, 2001; Donald et al., 2014; Ntombela & Mhlongo, 2010).

Inclusive Education: The term inclusive education refers to an educational model that intends to develop a teaching and learning environment that appropriately and adequately accommodates for the diverse educational needs of all learners (Bornman & Donohue, 2013; Lazarus et al., 2007; Walton et al., 2015).

Language of Learning and Teaching (LoLT): The language or languages that are officially used for the teaching and/or learning processes in the classroom as well as for assessment purposes. This may differ from the Medium of Instruction (Moonsamy & Kathard, 2015).

Medium of Instruction (MOI): refers to the language that is used to teach learners in a particular school (Moonsamy & Kathard, 2015).

Second-Language Learner (L2): A child who learns in a language that is not their mother tongue (Paradis et al., 2009).

The next section will provide a brief outline of each chapter explaining what has been included in this study.

1.8 Chapter Outline

Chapter 1 provided the background of this study and a brief introduction to the research problem. It also presented the objectives of the study and the aligned research questions that the study aimed to address. In addition this chapter introduced the research methodology used for this particular study, which is further discussed in Chapter 3.

In what follows, Chapter 2 provides the theoretical framework in which this study was conducted. The chapter describes the historical and current state of the South African education system. Furthermore, Chapter 2 presents the available empirical literature on issues related to language as a barrier to learning.

Chapter 3 provides a detailed discussion of the research methodology used in this study. This includes the issues of sampling, data collection, data analysis and all ethical considerations.

Chapter 4 presents the findings of this study according to the themes that emerged during the data analysis process and will be integrated to summarise the key findings of the study.

Thereafter, Chapter 5 discusses the findings of the study in relation to the research questions and existing literature as presented in previous chapters. The themes discussed in this chapter represent the challenges facing Foundation Phase educators who teach L2 learners in ex-Model C schools in Pietermaritzburg.

Finally Chapter 6 presents the conclusions drawn from the findings of this study. It also discusses the limitations of the research and concludes by providing recommendations for future studies.

1.9 Conclusion

This introductory chapter aimed to provide the background and context of the current research problem in order to contextualise the purpose of conducting this particular study. Furthermore, it presented the research objectives and questions; the research method employed and described the chapter outline of this study. The following chapter will focus on the theoretical framework and literature relevant to the study.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter will begin by providing the theoretical framework in which this research study was conducted. Thereafter it will proceed to describe other theories of language that relate to the study topic. Next, the chapter will examine the history and recent state of the South African education system. Finally it will discuss the documented results and academic findings of studies done on language, where it is regarded as a barrier to learning.

This chapter will focus on the importance of language in learning as well as provide a synopsis of the complexities that surround educating L2 learners at ex-Model C schools. These ideas will be linked to the current policies and theories. Furthermore, this literature review aims to use the ideas, materials and experiences presented in this chapter to enhance the overall credibility of this current study.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

The following section will provide a brief discussion on the theoretical framework used in understanding the conceptual basis of this particular study.

2.2.1 Vygotsky's Socio-Cultural Theory

Lev Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory emphasises that learning and development is a culturally and environmentally-based phenomenon (Burkholder & Pehlez, 2000; Vandeyar & Amin, 2014; Vygotsky, 1978). Vygotsky identified three important aspects of learning which included the role of the social context, language and mediation (Donald, Lazarus & Lolwana, 2010; Donald et al., 2014). The socio-cultural theory argues that learning involves the internalization and meaning-making of social relations within the psyche (Donald et al., 2014; Lillemyr et al., 2011; Richter & Dawes, 2008; Shaffer & Kipp, 2007; Vygotsky, 1978). More specifically it proposes that the daily social context provides a child with a learning environment where more knowledgeable others adopt the role of mediators (Burkholder & Pehlez, 2000; Donald et al., 2014; Shaffer & Kipp, 2007; Vygotsky, 1978).

In the case of the current study, the more knowledgeable others refer to Foundation Phase educators who are primarily responsible for managing and facilitating the formal aspects of a child's education. Vygotsky argued that mediation is vital in the development of thinking, skills and attitudes (Donald et al., 2010; Donald et al., 2014; Vandeyar & Amin, 2014). This occurs through the more knowledgeable others implementing scaffolding techniques which provide learners with tools and strategies that assist in educational processes (Lillemyr et al., 2011; Maher, 2012; Vygotsky, 1978).

Vygotsky's philosophy also emphasised the importance of language which plays an integral role in human cognitive development (Vygotsky, 1978). More specifically Vygotsky believed that external language is developed through the social interactions of the child and a more capable other which therefore encourage the initial stages of learning and the development of cognitive structures (Burkholder & Pehlez, 2000; Vandeyar & Amin, 2014; Vygotsky, 1978).

Vygotsky proposed that the collaborative learning process between the child and more experienced other eventually create mental functions that become internalized schemas, thought or *inner speech* and thereafter leads to understanding (Burkholder & Pehlez, 2000; Donald et al., 2010; Donald et al., 2014). Berk (1992 as cited in Shaffer & Kipp, 2007) further explained that when a child has developed sufficient competency and independence in their learning they eventually "rely more heavily on private speech when facing difficult rather than easy tasks, and deciding how to proceed after making errors" (p. 283).

For the purpose of the current study, language was seen as a crucial element for linguistically diverse learners who are being taught and assessed at English medium schools. This is a result of language (primarily through dialogue) forming a central component of Foundation Phase teaching where educators (as the more knowledgeable other) play a vital role within this particular stage of learning (Maher, 2012; Shaffer & Kipp, 2007). The current study sought to investigate whether language diversity contributed to L2 learners' level of participation in classroom activities and if it any way effected their performance in assessment tasks when compared to their English-speaking peers.

Vygotsky describes language as being spoken, written and mathematical which includes other symbols (Burkholder & Pehlez, 2000; Donald et al., 2010; Donald et al., 2014). These aspects of language are regarded as fundamental in a child's academic development within the Foundation Phase of schooling (Curriculum & Assessment Policy Statement, 2012; Vandeyar & Amin, 2014). Furthermore, dialogues are used as the fundamental tool through which learning is directed and motivated amongst young children in the early stages of education (Maher, 2012; Shaffer & Kipp, 2007).

Language is a key factor that allows communication amongst people in their social interactions. Vygotsky advocated that through social interactions, an individual develops inner speech which is significant in early cognitive development and later leads to understanding (Burkholder & Pehlez, 2000; Donald et al., 2010; Donald et al., 2014; Shaffer & Kipp, 2007; Vandeyar & Amin, 2014). In light of Vygotsky's theory, Lillemyr et al. (2011) emphasized that "the tools, interventions, and language of one culture may be significantly different from another, and so education must situate learning within the appropriate social and cultural contexts" (p.46). The present study therefore intended to firstly identify the impact that multiculturalism may have on L2 learners who attend ex-Model C schools and use English as the MOI. Secondly it investigated how language may effect the L2 learners overall academic performance in such schools.

From a South African perspective, according to the views of the Department of Arts and Culture (DoAC), an individual's language is considered a vital part of their being which is used to "express our hopes and ideals, articulate our thoughts and values, explore our experience and customs, and construct our society and the laws that govern it" (DoAC, 2003, p.3). Language also provides people with the ability to function within and adapt to a diverse and developing society (DAC, 2003; Painter & Baldwin, 2004). South Africans have the right to use any of the eleven official languages (DoAC, 2003; Naidoo & Muthukrishna, 2014; Painter & Baldwin, 2004). These languages include those which have been recognised in the South African Bill of Rights and Constitution. The languages of the South African nation are "a unique resource that should be celebrated and preserved" (DAC, 2003, p.3).

The current research study's objective was to explore the challenges facing L2 learners in the Foundation Phase of ex-Model C schools in Pietermaritzburg. More specifically it considered educators' perceptions surrounding linguistic diversity (as encouraged at a broader contextual level i.e. by policy and law) and its influence in the multicultural classroom in terms of barriers to learning.

This study applied the principles of Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory to further comprehend and emphasise the importance of language within the learning process particularly amongst those in the early years of childhood development (Burkholder & Pehlez, 2000; Donald et al., 2010; Donald et al., 2014; Shaffer & Kipp, 2007; Vandeyar & Amin, 2014). Moreover the socio-cultural theory reflects the importance of both the educator and child within the learning process together with the influence of culture, which is in accordance with the ideology of the inclusive South African education system (Lillemyr et al., 2011).

This study aimed to investigate the multicultural context of ex-Model C schooling in relation to the research problem. More specifically using Vygotsky's philosophy it took a particular interest in linguistic diversity and the challenges that may result amongst children who are learning in a language that is not their mother tongue (Vandeyar & Amin, 2014). Furthermore, it also considered the perceptions of educators (as mediators of learning) and the effects that language diversity would have in areas such as teaching methods, subject content, assessment and classroom management (Lillemyr et al., 2011; Maher, 2012; Vygotsky, 1978).

The following section will further describe the theories of bilingualism and language acquisition that have been applied within this study. These theories are considered as being important when developing a further understanding of linguistic diversity in relation to learning.

2.3 Theories of Bilingualism and Language Acquisition

2.3.1 Bilingualism

Bilingualism is described as the ability for an individual to speak two different languages with fluency (Wei, 2000). Furthermore, it can also be defined more broadly as it encompasses many levels of language acquisition that extends beyond proficiency.

Likewise Mackey (2002) defined bilingualism as the “equal mastery, choice and use of two languages” (p. 329). In order to understand this further, one must determine which of the two languages, are in fact the first language. Furthermore, these languages include aspects of proficiency, competence, receptive and expressive language; and also the areas of language such as speaking, listening, comprehension, reading and writing (Hamers & Blanc, 2000).

The existing literature indicates that bilingualism can be regarded as being part of a multidimensional continuum that includes proficiency as well as linguistic structures, culture, notions of competency and issues that surround language use such as accent and other non-linguistic dimensions (Baker, 2001; Flanagan, McGrew & Ortiz, 2000; Hamers & Blanc, 2000; Lacroix, 2008). Dabène (1994) suggests that there are three variants of first languages which include the mother tongue, the native language and lastly the language in which an individual has the highest level of proficiency. Furthermore, the author proposes the “*antériorité d’appropriation*” which refers to the language that was first learned to describe one’s mother tongue or first language learned (Dabène, 1994, p.11).

Hamers and Blanc (2000) suggested that a distinction must be made between the terms first language and native language, as research has shown that an individual can be more proficient in a language either than their mother tongue. Hughes, Shaunessy, Brice, Ratliff and McHatton (2006) suggested that bilingualism had negative effects on the intellectual development as it was thought to have a subtractive influence in language development, where the second language would not synchronize with the development of the first language. Bilingualism has been regarded as one of the contributors to a perceived inferior intelligence (Hamers & Blanc, 2000).

In light of the current study, bilingualism refers to the learner’s level of proficiency in at least one of the four areas of language. This includes speaking, listening comprehension, reading and writing in English and another language (e.g. isiZulu or Afrikaans). Additionally it considered the level of language competency expected and shared by the learners within the class and what would be considered an acceptable level of bilingual competency amongst L2 learners. This links to the research objective which aims to explore the participation of L2 learners within the context of English

medium schools as well as the influence of their linguistic diversity in a multicultural school context.

Lacroix (2008) proposed that the study of bilingualism could uncover issues of language acquisition, language development and the role of culture within the broad understanding of language. Lee (1996) pointed out that the debate surrounding the implication of bilingual education within schools centres around several key issues, which include “culture and language maintenance, individual, community, and national identity, and equitable access to social, economic, and educational opportunities” (p. 500).

This study focuses on the challenges facing bilingual learners who are considered as L2 learners at English medium ex-Model C schools. More specifically in relation to the research objectives and questions it examined the theory of bilingualism, where language was firstly explored as a potential barrier to learning amongst L2 learners. Secondly it considered its influence in the participation of L2 learners in the learning process when compared to their English-speaking peers.

2.3.2 Code Switching

Code switching (CS) refers to a phenomenon that occurs in multilingual communities where a unique dialect is used by interchanging between two or more languages varieties during a conversation (Lacroix, 2008; Moradi, 2014; Myers-Scotton & Ury, 1977; Rose & van Dulm, 2006). Within the study of CS there are two interconnected approaches which take on alternate perspectives of the phenomenon. This includes the structural linguistic and the sociolinguistic approach respectively (Boztepe, 2003; Woolard, 2004; Moradi, 2014).

The structural approach includes theories of language acquisition which are mainly concerned with the grammatical aspects of CS, these are the structural features of syntactic and morphosyntactic patterns underlying the grammar of CS (Boztepe, 2003; Woolard, 2004). The sociolinguistic approach on the other hand, considers language within its social context and concentrates “on the social motivations, attitudes and social correlates of CS” (Moradi, 2014, p. 16).

CS is particularly evident in the South African context as a result of its linguistically diverse society (Rose & van Dulm, 2006). This study will consider CS within the context of an ex-Model C school, where children of various linguistic backgrounds are collectively learning in a language that is not necessarily their mother-tongue. Moreover it will investigate the possible strengths and/or implications that CS has within the context of multilingual education and its relation to language barriers to learning (Rose & van Dulm, 2006; Vandeyar & Amin, 2014). Carol Myers-Scotton's theory of CS is known as the Markedness Model. This theory suggests that there are various ways of speaking which include different speech styles, languages and dialects that are psychosocially based within a specific community (Moradi, 2014; Rose & van Dulm, 2006).

Rose and van Dulm (2006) further explain:

A particular code is viewed in terms of the marked versus the unmarked opposition with reference to the extent its use matches community expectations for the interaction type. In other words, what community norms would predict is unmarked; what community norms would not predict is marked. The Markedness Model uses the marked versus unmarked distinction as a theoretical construct to explain the social and psychological motivations for making one code choice over another (p.3).

The Markedness Model further proposes that speakers have a sense of markedness regarding the linguistic codes available for any interaction, and that they select their code(s) based on the social interaction or context in which they are placed (Moradi, 2014; Rose & van Dulm, 2006). More specifically CS can be used in a variety of forms where it can be intra-sentential or inter-sentential (Boztepe, 2003; Myers-Scotton, 1993).

Example 1: Intra- sentential

‘Sizohamba what time ngeSonto?’

What time are we leaving on Sunday?

Example 2: Inter-sentential

‘Please come with me to the market. Ngifuna ukuyo thenga inkuku ephilayo’

Please come with me to the market. I want to buy a live chicken.

Although they are fundamentally different, intra-sentential CS is frequently used interchangeably with code-mixing (Boztepe, 2003; Brock-Utne & Holmarsdottir, 2004). More specifically Kieswetter (1995 cited in Mokgwathi, 2011) defines code-mixing as the use of morphemes from two languages to develop new words in a new variety of speech. For example, “uku-drive-a” (an isiZulu form meaning to drive).

Borrowing is another significant concept formed around the phenomena of CS. Linguistic items which are structurally adapted to a new language are defined as borrowed. According to Gumpers (1986 as cited in Mokgwathi, 2011) borrowing is defined as the transference of single words or short idiomatic phrases from one language to another, where once borrowed, the linguistic item becomes integrated into the grammatical system of the host language.

Despite the controversial views on CS, Ferguson (2002 as cited in Brock-Utne & Holmarsdottir, 2004) argues that it “should not be seen as a dysfunctional form of speech behaviour, but on the contrary an important resource for the management of learning” (p. 77). Furthermore, Heugh (2000 as cited in Brock-Utne & Holmarsdottir, 2004) pointed out that it is impractical to believe that teaching and learning is primarily conducted in English amongst learners who are African-language speaking, particularly in rural communities. Adendorff (1993 as cited in Rose & Dulm, 2006) concludes that “teachers should be encouraged to accept code switching as a sign of bilingual competence, affording speakers communicative power, and thus social power” (p.2).

From the theoretical perspective of CS, the current study aimed to discover the prevalence and explore the functions of CS amongst L2 learners and educators in ex-Model C schools which have English as the MOI. It also aimed to investigate the potential influence that CS may have on the learning and teaching amongst L2 learners in the Foundation Phase of such schools.

According to the current research objectives the CS theory was considered in terms of its strengths in promoting learner participation as well as a form of learner support strategy in multilingual education. This aspect of language was considered due to the increasing number of bilingual children being taught at ex-Model C schools that may practice CS and/or experience language barriers to learning (Rose & van Dulm, 2006; Vandeyar & Amin, 2014).

The subsequent sections will begin by offering a broad discussion on the South African education system. Thereafter it will examine the empirical literature in relation to research topic from an international perspective as well as from studies done in South Africa. More specifically the following sections will examine the documented results and academic findings of studies done on language, which can be perceived as a barrier to learning.

2.4 South African Educational Context

The following section will discuss the South African educational context. More specifically it will include an examination of its history, current context as well as the education policies that are related to the research topic and overall study.

2.4.1 The history of South African Education

Since the end of apartheid (1994) the South African government has made efforts to restructure the injustices of the past, including the system of education (Broom, 2004; Lazarus et al., 2007; Vandeyar & Amin, 2014). These reformation actions focus on areas such as equality, non-discrimination and respect for the diversity of all learners (de Clercq, 1997; Painter & Baldwin, 2004). The previous systems of belief within the apartheid government had dismantled and separated society with limited educational opportunities available for the subordinate groups such as Coloureds, Indians and Blacks (de Clercq, 1997; Richter & Dawes, 2008; Spaull, 2013; Vandeyar & Amin, 2014).

In relation to the current study, apartheid can be viewed as a factor that effectively divided education through the language policy which was “built for separate development, unequal resources and a cognitively impoverished curriculum that

resulted in the majority of the population being under-educated” (Heugh, 2000, as cited in Navsaria et al., 2011, p. 3; Richter & Dawes, 2008).

Oswald and de Villiers (2013) state that whilst the debate focused mainly on educational reform (to address the needs of the historically disadvantaged population groups), the South African government wanted to simultaneously provide all children with a relevant and equal education of an acceptable standard. However this was not easy to accomplish as the country had inherited enormous inequalities and fragmentation in the education system (Oswald & de Villiers, 2013; Spaull, 2013; Vandeyar & Amin, 2014). These views are consistent with the study previously conducted by Ntuli (1998) who identified the nature and dynamics of L2 learners in ex-Model C schools. He proposed that from a psycho-pedagogical perspective, such children often experience educational distress mainly due to the history of educational discrimination (Ntuli, 1998).

Despite the reformation of the country, the residual effects from the legacy of apartheid still remain. Thus unequal development is still present in the South African society and its education system (de Clercq, 1997; Naidoo & Muthukrishna, 2014; Richter & Dawes, 2008; Spaull, 2013; Vandeyar & Amin, 2014). In addition Jansen and Blank (2014) noted that despite the number of black middle class learners growing in former Model C schools, there is still a majority of dysfunctional schools that will continue to serve black learners only.

This cultural imbalance and changes within the broad South African educational structure leads to the initial question of this study which aimed to identify the current challenges of including L2 learners in ex-Model C schools. More specifically it intended to ascertain educators’ perceptions of these difficulties in relation to language diversity and its effect on teaching as well as learning. In addition the study also aimed to identify the current learner support available for those who experienced language barriers to learning.

The following section will further discuss the current South African education system with a focus on ex-Model C schools.

2.4.2 South African Education Today

The current learner population of ex-Model C schools is reflective of the multi-cultural context of South Africa in terms of race, class, language, gender, ethnicity and religion (Carrim, 2013; Naidoo & Muthukrishna, 2014; Painter & Baldwin, 2004; Probyn, 2006; Vandeyar & Amin, 2014).

Navsaria et al. (2011) pointed out that since the end of apartheid, one of the most prominent changes that occurred in ex-Model C schools was racial desegregation, which was developed through the migration of non-White learners to former exclusively Whites-only schools. Likewise Pluddemann (1999) and Vandeyar and Amin (2014) explained that since 1994 former Whites-only schools, which are situated in urban areas, have become increasingly diverse both linguistically, racially, and culturally.

Carrim (2013) stated that the extent of the post-apartheid school desegregation has been closely monitored and investigated by a project conducted by the Witwatersrand Education Policy Unit (Wits EPU). Moreover the longitudinal study found that there was a significant migration of learners in a singular direction (Carrim, 2013). This meant that firstly, there was a great movement of non-White learners (i.e. African, Indian and Coloured) into previously Whites-only schools; where in the recent years they have slowly become in the majority. Secondly it also meant that the African children were also beginning to attend predominantly Indian and Coloured schools. However it was found that nationally, White, Indian and Coloured learners were not enrolling at African schools (Carrim, 2013). These findings indicated an “overwhelming pattern of assimilation in these desegregated schools” (Carrim, 2013, p. 41).

These views were consistent with Pliddemann, Mati and Mahlalela-Thusi (1998):

one of the most dramatic but unplanned consequences of the political changes that took place after the general elections in 1994, as far as the education sector is concerned, was the sudden inflow of African-language-speaking learners into schools which had previously been open only to people classified as White or Coloured (p.1).

Soudien (2010) further highlighted the recent socio-economic development and rise of the Black middle class in post-apartheid South Africa, which has influenced the demographics and surge of Black African children into ex-Model C schools since 1994. Moreover it has been suggested that many Black African people can afford the fees of ex-Model C schools and prefer that particular form of schooling for their children (Painter & Baldwin, 2004; Pourdavood, Carignan, King, Webb & Glover, 2004; Soudien, 2010). Likewise Brock-Utne and Holmarsdottir (2004) emphasised that African-language speakers consider English as “a language necessary for their children to learn if they go abroad or have a chance of a higher position in business, government or academia” (p.70).

According to Broom (2004) there has been “significant alterations in the size and racial and language composition of classes” within primary schools in South Africa (p.1). The author also identified an increase in the number of L2 children learning to read in a language that is not their home language (Broom, 2004). Vandeyar and Amin (2014) further pointed out that the multicultural, multilingual and multiracial nature of South African classrooms can present challenges for learners and educators alike. More specifically within the context of ex-Model C schooling linguistic diversity presents many challenges particularly for monolingual educators despite its democratic correctness (Broom, 2004; Navsaria et al., 2011; Vandeyar & Amin, 2014).

The current study aimed to investigate the relevance of the above literature within the context of Pietermaritzburg. More specifically it aimed to ascertain the demographic changes within ex-Model C schools and its effects on teaching and learning amongst linguistically diverse learners as well as any differences in participation amongst L2 learners and their English-speaking peers.

According to Navsaria et al. (2011) the language of learning and teaching (LoLT) and MOI within most ex-Model C schools in South Africa has remained English. Moreover research has shown an increasing number of linguistically diverse learners who now attend these schools, having had little or no exposure to English outside of the school environment (Broom, 2004; Carrim, 2013; Navsaria et al., 2011). Furthermore, Brock-Utne and Holmarsdottir (2004) argue that “learners are unable to benefit from

educational opportunities if these are provided through a foreign medium of instruction that the learners do not understand” (p. 81).

This predicament has led to numerous teaching and learning challenges that have contributed to lower levels of academic achievement amongst L2 learners. This includes language barriers to learning and an unequal distribution of resources to accommodate for such difficulties (Ntombela & Mhlongo, 2010; Vandeyar & Amin, 2014). Navsaria et al. (2011) further argue that such challenges within the South African education system must be understood in relation to the country’s political history. After two decades of democracy, South Africa is still in the process of transformation especially within the sector of basic education (Navsaria et al., 2011; Painter & Baldwin, 2004; Walton et al., 2015). Furthermore, it must be emphasised that to date, the residual effects of apartheid still form barriers to learning for some previously disadvantaged children (Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2004 as cited in Navsaria et al., 2011; Walton et al., 2015).

The preceding points link to the research question which aimed to identify whether the above mentioned difficulties are actually present within the ex-Model C schools of Pietermaritzburg and to investigate the current measures that are being implemented in order to address them.

The following section will discuss issues related to school integration within post-apartheid context of education. More specifically it will highlight some of the challenges within the current South African education system.

2.4.2.1 School integration

Nkomo et al. (2004) have suggested that school integration was a vital step since the abolishment of apartheid laws however the rejection of racially or linguistic exclusive schools has been and still is, a major task. These views were echoed by Navsaria et al. (2011) and Carrim (2013) respectively.

Research has shown that the past racial discrimination in South Africa has influenced the workings of its education system (Lazarus et al., 2007; Nkomo et al., 2004). Moreover the residual effect of such an unjust regime is still present within these

systems (Carrim, 2013; Jansen & Blank, 2014; Vandeyar & Amin, 2014). Nkomo et al. (2004) argues that within a post-apartheid context, schools should now be run with an understanding of an enlightened, modern and democratic South Africa. Furthermore, Jansen and Blank (2014) provide a number of strategies to achieve this, even within the context of the most rural and under-resourced schools in South Africa.

Schools play a crucial role in the development of the South African nation as they have the ability to reconstruct the values, beliefs and attitudes of young people and empower a democratic nation (Lazarus et al., 2007; Nkomo et al., 2004; Vandeyar & Amin, 2014). Furthermore, Nkomo et al. (2004) pointed out that South African schools need to ensure meaningful interaction amongst learners and educators through the use of suitable curricula, texts and pedagogies that are informed by a democratic ethos. These views were consistent with the findings of Jansen and Blank (2014) who further explained what they perceived as being successful previously-disadvantaged schools around South Africa.

Nkomo et al. (2004) and Lazarus et al. (2007) emphasise the importance of inclusivity and social cohesion. Moreover the authors claim that such ideologies should be the primary aim of South African classrooms, as they believe it would provide a framework in which the division and fragmentation of the apartheid education can be overcome (Lazarus et al., 2007; Nkomo et al., 2004).

However Carrim (2013) challenges this view by suggesting that the distinct learner migration patterns (i.e. the movement of non-White children to ex-Model C schools and the lack of the converse) does not reflect the intended transformation of the post-apartheid education system. In fact Carrim (2013) believes that it has created new challenges that need to be addressed in order to reach the ideal of a democratic school culture. Despite “the importance of achieving democracy, equality and human rights in education practices, the findings indicate that currently neither democracy nor equality and or human rights is being effectively achieved in South African schools” (Carrim, 2013, p.43).

This study aimed to explore the practicalities of these suggestions within the current context of ex-Model C schooling in Pietermaritzburg. More specifically the research

questions of this study drive a particular interest that relates to the challenges of multiculturalism within the context of an inclusive education system, and the manner in which such difficulties are being addressed.

The current South African government demands that the Department of Education (hereafter, DoE) must be responsive to the various needs of a learner's cultural and educational diversity and accommodate for it accordingly. The DoE has addressed this by implementing strategies such as the inclusive education approach and the addition of the Education White Paper 6: Special needs, building an inclusive education and training system, which will be discussed in the following section (Helldin et al., 2011; Potterton, Utley & Potterton, 2004).

2.4.3 Inclusive Education

The South African inclusive education approach aims to build a teaching and learning environment that supports the educational needs of all members of society, with sufficient consideration and value placed on their diverse requirements (Bornman & Donohue, 2013; Lazarus et al., 2007; Walton et al., 2015). The fundamental premise of inclusive education addresses the past injustices of the apartheid government in South Africa. It also proposes that all people, especially those who have been previously excluded and discriminated against, can be catered for within any mainstream school in South Africa, and this includes people of linguistic diversity (Lazarus et al., 2007; Walton et al., 2015).

Inclusive education also aims to identify and address the particular needs of children who experience various barriers to learning such as language. The policy suggests that children who experience such barriers to learning require specific learning support from schools, which would necessitate a more integrated and inclusive site of learning and teaching (Bornman & Donohue, 2013; Lazarus et al., 2007; Mohamed & Laher, 2012; Walton et al., 2015).

More specifically inclusive education is based on supporting, recognising and respecting all learners in a diverse yet specified environment of learning. The inclusive approach to education encourages educators and the system of learning and teaching to build on similarities (DoE, 2001). The development of effective teaching strategies is

imperative and would benefit many learners within inclusive education. Lastly inclusive education focuses on overcoming barriers that prevent learners from meeting their academic potential (DoE, 2001). The focus of this approach is to highlight the adaptation and development of support systems available in the classroom (DoE, 2001).

Roth (2008 as cited in Oswald & de Villiers, 2013) advocates for the central assumptions and principles of inclusive education. The author argues that each child must be regarded as unique and suggests that any differences amongst children should be regarded as the norm in society, especially when dealing with issues surrounding education. He further proposes that as human beings, the only similarity we have is the fact that we have nothing in common (Roth, 2008 as cited in Oswald & de Villiers, 2013). This perspective suggests that by embracing the differences amongst learners, it will assist us in dismantling the traditional models of learning and teaching that are exclusive (Roth, 2009 as cited in Oswald & de Villiers, 2013).

The following section will discuss how the model of inclusive education has been applied and formalized within the South African education system through the Education White Paper 6.

2.4.3.1 Education White Paper 6: Special needs, building an inclusive education and training system (EWP6)

According to the DoE (2001) the inclusive education approach was formalized through the Education White Paper 6 (EWP6) which had arisen “out of the need for changes to be made to the provision of education and training so that it is responsive and sensitive to the diverse range of learning needs” (p.6).

The EWP6 also formalized the actions taken against the past discrimination and oppression within the South African educational context. It was used to justify and compensate for the lack of provision amongst subordinate groups during the apartheid regime (Helldin et al., 2011; Potterton et al., 2004) Likewise, other policy-makers suggested that it was another post-apartheid policy paper “that cuts our ties with the past and recognises the vital contribution that our people with disabilities are making and must continue to make, but as part of and not isolated from, the flowering of our nation” (DoE, 2001, p.3).

The EWP6 highlights eight major components that describe the ideals of an inclusive education system. Firstly, it begins by proposing that all learners are capable of learning and require support. It also accepts and respects the various differences amongst children which may include their particular learning needs and personal differences (Helldin et al., 2011; Potterton et al., 2004).

Thirdly, the policy proposes that inclusivity enables education structures, systems and learning methodologies to meet the needs of all learners. Furthermore, it suggests that schools must acknowledge and respect the differences in all learners which include age, gender, ethnicity, language, class, disability or HIV status (Helldin et al., 2011; Potterton et al., 2004).

Mohamed and Laher (2012) further highlight the EWP6 which states that all learners should have access to education and training. It further proposes that “learners who require education support through, for example, the tailoring of curriculum, instruction and assessment should be identified early, and for this purpose the Foundation Phase (Grades R-3) should be prioritized” (Mohamed & Laher, 2012, p. 133).

Ayramidis and Kalyva (2007 as cited in Bornman & Donohue, 2013) further suggested that “teachers are the driving force in the successful enactment of education policy as they are the gatekeepers of the classroom climate and activities. Depending on their attitudes toward inclusive policies, teachers can promote or hinder the success of inclusion” (p. 85). Furthermore, Ntombela and Mhlongo (2010) identified a discrepancy between the home language and the MoI for L2 learners who attend English medium schools (Ntombela & Mhlongo, 2010).

This premise serves as the underlying problem statement of this research study which proposes that the inconsistent levels of ELP between the home and school potentially causes language barriers to learning. Furthermore, the current study aimed to challenge how effectively the inclusive education approach is being implemented by educators in ex-Model C schools, in relation to language barriers to learning. Moreover it examined other policies such as the Language-in-Education policy as described below.

2.4.4 Language-in-Education Policy (LiEP)

The Language-in-Education Policy (LiEP) has played a crucial role in addressing the linguistic diversity of South African schools since 1997 (Pluddemann, 1999; Wright, 2012). More specifically it suggests that the South African education system has inherited a diverse range of “tensions, contradictions and sensitivities that are underpinned by racial and linguistic discrimination” (DoE, 1997, p.1). A number of discriminatory policies from the apartheid regime have effected the access of the certain learners to the education system and/or their success within it. Thus the inclusive education approach was considered as a solution to the needs of the post-apartheid South African education (Lazarus et al., 2007; Walton et al., 2015).

According to the LiEP of 1997 each school must decide on their own language policy, LoLT and the languages to be taught as subjects. Learners are required to learn at least two official languages as subjects and one of these should be the LoLT (Pluddemann, 1999; Probyn, 2006). Ntombela and Mhlongo (2010) pointed out that children of linguistic diversity, particularly African children, were regarded as disadvantaged due to their lack of fluency in English within schools who chose English as the MoI. According to the study this was a result of the lack of consistency between the child’s home language and the MoI at schools (Ntombela & Mhlongo, 2010).

Later the DoE suggested that in order to improve levels of literacy, learners may learn in their home language throughout schooling where it can be practisable (Ntombela & Mhlongo, 2010). Alternatively all learners could be taught in their mother-tongue during the Foundation Phase of Education only. However as from the start of Senior Primary in Grade 4, the child must be taught in English within all schools (including rural, township and ex-Model C), despite the indigenous language of the community in which the school is set (Ntombela & Mhlongo, 2010). Brock-Utne and Holmarsdottir (2004) on the other hand, argue that “this language paradox then becomes a barrier to knowledge and as a result students are not likely to receive quality education” (p.78).

This premise serves as the underlying problem statement of this research study which states that there are inconsistent levels of English literacy in the child’s home and school respectively. Moreover it is proposed that such inconsistencies perhaps contribute to barriers to learning amongst L2 learners in English medium schools.

According to Wright (2012) South Africa has an excellent post-apartheid LiEP despite the failures of the National Language Policy (NLP). He argues that the challenges of language diversity in South Africa needs to be understood at the broader contextual level and can thereafter proceed to address it in the education system (Wright, 2012). Furthermore, the author suggested that until we understand the effects of multilingualism at a broader level and can make it effective in the LiEP, the dilemmas in education will be misunderstood (Brock-Utne & Holmarsdottir, 2004; Wright, 2012).

Royds and Dale-Jones (2012) reported that the complexity of the LiEP lies in its attempt to maintain two demands simultaneously by emphasizing the nurturing of multilingualism and the need to gain access to global markets. The writers argue that this ideal is impractical with the limited exposure and development of English amongst L2 learners (Royds & Dale-Jones, 2012). Royds and Dale-Jones (2012) further reported that South African school childrens' exposure to the LoLT, which is usually English, is often delayed and minimal which leads to the detriment of L2 learners' academic development. Furthermore the writers reiterated the points made by Graham Dampier who suggested that the language policies being implemented in South Africa lack the long-term effects required by L2 learners especially in the field of mathematics (Royds & Dale-Jones, 2012).

In light of the above points Owen-Smith (2010) explained that despite the implementation of the 3-year mother tongue policy, parents of L2 learners still prefer to enrol their children in English Medium schools. Furthermore, she pointed out that African-language speaking learners who attend schools that teach in their mother tongue, often experienced lower quality of teaching due to minimal resources and poor pedagogy (Owen-Smith, 2010).

These findings are crucial in terms of the current study's research objectives. The focal point of this study explores educator's perceptions of the challenges facing L2 learners in ex-Model C schools and aims to better understand the educational circumstances that L2 learners face within the context of English medium schools. This study also investigates the practicality of the current South African education policies in relation to everyday teaching practice and highlights the needs of L2 learners and areas in which they require further support.

This study will now provide a further discussion of the more recent education policy- the *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS)*.

2.4.5 The Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS)

According to the DoE, the *Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS)* is the latest curriculum implemented in South African schools since 2012. This policy has prioritized learner-centeredness and inclusivity which is vital to the organization, planning and teaching at each school (Naidoo & Muthukrishna, 2014; Oswald & de Villiers, 2013). This premise also suggests that South African educators should have the ability to recognize and address barriers to learning and accommodate for learners' diversity which may include language differences (Mohangi, 2015; Naidoo & Muthukrishna, 2014; Oswald & de Villiers, 2013).

Jansen and Blank (2014) identified a limitation in the current South African education system. The authors stated that:

We fail to establish solid foundations for learning early in the school cycle, with the result that learners in the later grades, remain in a constant state of catch-up that is exacerbated by policies that demand Principals promote failing children to the next grade (Jansen & Blank, 2014, p. 65).

According to CAPS, Foundation Phase educators are required to address all barriers to learning faced by the learners in their classroom. Spaull (2013) points out “that it is imperative to also identify and remediate these learning gaps early on, before they become insurmountable learning deficits and lead to almost certain failure and drop-out” (p. 6). Furthermore teachers are also held responsible for adopting innovative strategies within their teaching methods to intervene during lessons (Mohangi, 2015; Naidoo & Muthukrishna, 2014; Oswald & de Villiers, 2013).

Scarinci, Rose, Pee and Webb (2015) highlight the importance of Foundation Phase educators having knowledge of language development. Moreover the authors emphasise the need for such educators to create learning environments which promote language development; and use their knowledge to identify learners with potential language difficulties and make appropriate referrals to related specialists (Scarinci et

al., 2015). However it was found in the Scarinci et al. (2015) study that many Foundation Phase educators often lack knowledge of child language development and received limited training in this area.

This research study aimed to discover how the expectations of the newly developed curriculum are currently being implemented within the context of ex-Model C Foundation Phase schooling in Pietermaritzburg. Moreover, it examined the research question which aims to identify the support strategies amongst L2 learners and how educators are able to identify and appropriately address language barriers to learning amongst these learners within their schools.

2.5 Defining barriers to learning

Swart and Pettipher (2005) define barriers to learning as “those factors which lead to the inability of the system to accommodate diversity, which lead to learning breakdown or which prevent learners from accessing educational provision” (p.17). Furthermore, it includes factors that impede learning and may be located within the learner, within the school, the education system or within the broader social economic and political context (Swart & Pettipher, 2005).

Wium (2015) further pointed out that the South African education system is complex and there are various barriers to learning that effect the quality of education. This includes issues such as exclusionary policies and practices, a lack of basic and appropriate learning materials, lack of support for teachers, inappropriate teaching methods and assessment procedures, inadequate learning and teacher support materials, unpreparedness of learners at school entry level, low levels of literacy amongst parents and caregivers and lastly psycho-social, physical and emotional difficulties amongst learners (Wium, 2015).

According to Wright (2012) English is regarded as a marker of sophistication and modernity in the contemporary society especially amongst those who are involved in the urban sectors of South Africa. Indigenous languages are now considered more useful in a personal context where communication amongst communities that carry out functions of social identity, culture, heritage and tradition (Wright, 2012).

In addition, Brock-Utne and Holmarsdottir (2004) point out that:

Learning opportunities are not designed to meet the basic learning needs of the students if the language of instruction becomes a barrier to knowledge. Likewise, education cannot possibly be equitable and non-discriminatory when the medium of instruction is a language that neither the teachers nor the learners can use sufficiently (p. 81).

In the context of this study, English is identified as an intricate barrier to learning especially for L2 learners who are educated in schools where the MOI is English. One of the main research questions within this study aims to further identify how language is considered a barrier to learning amongst L2 learners in ex-Model C schools and the challenges that this may present for learners and educators alike. Additionally it investigates the current learner support strategies that are being implemented in these schools to address such learning barriers.

The section below will present a brief discussion on several studies conducted in South Africa in relation to language barriers to learning within the ex-Model C schooling context.

2.6 Studies done in South Africa in relation to language barriers to learning

Ntuli (1998) aimed to pursue a study of the relevant literature in Psychopedagogics and later formulate recommendations which could serve as guidelines to provide support for the needs of the L2 learner who may have been experiencing barriers to learning (Ntuli, 1998). His research included an extensive literature review which was supplemented with interviews conducted with school principals, educators and high school learners who were either isiZulu or English-speaking (Ntuli, 1998).

The research findings identified the need for ex-Model C schools to adequately accommodate for all linguistic groups and to provide counselling and involvement programmes for L2 learners and their parents (Ntuli, 1998). Furthermore, the study highlighted the inadequate training of teachers, especially for the purposes of multicultural education that is found in ex-Model C schools. In addition, Ntuli (1998)

also suggested that there was a need for further research into multicultural education in South Africa (Ntuli, 1998).

More recently, Monyai (2010) conducted a study where she identified the language barriers faced by L2 learners at a particular ex-Model C Primary school in Pretoria, Gauteng. She aimed to investigate and describe the educational challenges facing these L2 learners in relation to language, and possibly offer suggestions to heighten the awareness of educational policy makers (Monyai, 2010). Monyai's (2010) study took on both a qualitative and a quantitative nature. The study identified that the challenges faced by L2 learners often lead to academic failure (Monyai, 2010). Moreover, the research found that monolingualism amongst teachers and the limited English proficiency amongst parents were also major language barriers to learning (Monyai, 2010).

Likewise the study by Ntombela and Mhlongo (2010) displayed elements of poor participation amongst L2 learners within the learning process. Moreover it suggested that parents of L2 learners valued English as a LoLT and expected their children to become fluent in the language (Ntombela & Mhlongo, 2010). The study concluded that the demand for English as a LoLT, results from a poor understanding of the complexities of language and literacy development which often results in language and communication barriers (Ntombela & Mhlongo, 2010).

In similar vein, Pourdavood and colleagues (2004) identified the negative effects of language in relation to the transformation of South African schools. This included a lack of parental involvement and limited communication between educators and L2 learners' parents as a result of language barriers, which often makes it difficult for parents (who lack ELP) to participate in their children's education.

Drawing on the above illustrations, this study aimed to explore the progress of the current context of multicultural ex-Model C schooling as suggested by Ntuli (1998). In addition, this study investigated the effectiveness of past academic recommendations in the present education system. Furthermore, this study also aimed to identify the challenges particularly faced by L2 learners in the Foundation Phase of education which has been minimally researched in the context of KwaZulu-Natal.

2.7 The importance of language in teaching and learning

According to Ntombela and Mhlongo (2010) language can be understood as the medium that facilitates communication between individuals. This is especially true within the school context where teaching and learning takes place primarily through language. During lessons, language is imperative as it allows people to communicate, to control behaviour and also influences self-expression, meaning making, learning and discovering. The internalization of language also allows the organization of the child's thinking and understanding of concepts (Ntombela & Mhlongo, 2010).

Furthermore, Shaffer and Kipp (2007) explained that according to the Vygotskian paradigm, upon which this research study was based,

Many of the truly important discoveries that occur within the context of cooperative or collaborative dialogues between a skilful tutor, who models the activity and transmits verbal instructions and a novice pupil who seeks to understand the tutor's instructions and eventually internalizes this information using it to regulate his or her performance (p. 277).

Dialogues are used as the fundamental tool in which learning is directed and motivated. Learning is also dependent on the effective interaction between the learners and their educator where good quality pedagogy plays a vital role (Ntombela & Mhlongo, 2010). Educators are essentially responsible for providing learners with the adequate tools and opportunities to practice the skill of effective communication where learners must learn to talk, and talk in order to learn. Vinjevoold (1999, as cited in Probyn, 2006) argued that minimal reading and writing happens in many South African classrooms and often talk plays a key role in educating the youth of this country.

This study aimed to ascertain the effects of language diversity on aspects of teaching and learning in the multicultural ex-Model C classroom. In addition it considered whether language formed a barrier in the teaching and learning process amongst L2 learners in the Foundation Phase of ex-Model C schools.

2.8 Additive Bilingualism

The LiEP states that school language policies should promote additive bilingualism, which is defined as maintaining home languages while providing access to and the effective acquisition of additional languages (DoAC, 2003; Donald et al., 2010; Donald et al., 2014; Probyn, 2006). Furthermore, the policy advocates that the “additive approach to bilingualism is to be seen as the normal orientation of our language-in-education policy. With regard to the delivery system, it was suggested that the policy will progressively be guided by the results of comparative research, both locally and internationally” (DoE, 1997, p. 1).

Cummins (2000 as cited in O' Connor & Geiger, 2009) further state that the additive bilingual approach has many developmental benefits for the learner when it comes to enhanced cognition, linguistic and academic growth (Donald et al., 2010).

Paradis et al. (2009) pointed out that

When young children are developing two languages at the same time, the two developing languages build on each other rather than take away from each other. The stronger the first (or home) language proficiency is, the stronger the second language proficiency will be, particularly with academic literacy (p.5).

The authors further propose that maintaining one's home language is essential to a child's success in school (Paradis et al., 2009). Likewise Owen-Smith (2010) argues that a solid foundation of cognitive and academic development in a child's home language is necessary in establishing the structures needed for learning a second language. Furthermore, the author states that the sound knowledge of one's primary language plays a crucial role in scaffolding, which is needed to assist the learner in the transferring the knowledge from one linguistic understanding to another (Owen-Smith, 2010).

This research study intended to discover the complexities of implementing additive bilingualism in ex-Model C schools especially amongst young children who have a limited language competency in a second language when compared to their mother tongue. Furthermore it investigated if additive bilingualism is a practical solution to

overcoming language barriers in learning especially when many educators at former model-C schools are monolingual.

2.9 Obtaining English Language Proficiency

Paradis et al. (2009) suggest that contrary to popular belief children, much like adults, take many years to become competent in English, whether learning it as a first or second language. Furthermore the authors state that

It takes approximately three to four years in school for young children learning English to accumulate an English vocabulary size comparable to their English-speaking peers, and even longer for them to produce sentences free of grammatical errors. It can take from five to seven years in school for young children learning English to master complex academic English skills, both spoken and written, that are the same as their peers who speak English as their first language (Paradis et al., 2009, p. 3).

These views are consistent with that of Du Plessis and Law (2008, as cited in Ntombela & Mhlongo, 2010) and Owen-Smith (2010) who states that research has proven that L2 speakers need five to eight years of well-resourced learning and teaching in English; before it can be successfully used as a LoLT.

Within the context of this study, the research aimed to investigate the ELP of L2 learners within the Foundation Phase of ex-Model C schools in comparison to their English-speaking peers. Furthermore, it intended to ascertain the effects that linguistic diversity may have on their academic performance as well as its influence on areas such as subject content, teaching methods and assessment.

2.10 Factors influencing the acquisition of English as a second-language

According to Carson (2012 as cited in Wium, 2015) “international prevalence studies indicate that one in three learners struggle with the acquisition of basic reading and writing skills” (p. 147). More specifically Paradis et al. (2009) propose that each child varies in their rate of acquiring English as a second language. The authors further suggest that these individual differences can be attributed to the following four aspects

which include: the language aptitude of the child, the age of beginning to acquire English, the socio-economic status of the child's family and the quality and quantity of exposure to English (Paradis et al., 2009). These four elements of language acquisition will be explained below and later related to the research questions.

Firstly, language aptitude can be defined as a type of learning skill, a set of verbal and memory abilities that varies between individuals (Paradis et al., 2009). Children and adults with high language aptitude tend to be faster L2 learners where language aptitude is thought to be an inherent characteristic (Paradis et al., 2009).

Secondly, age of acquisition also plays a crucial role in language acquisition. Paradis et al. (2009) pointed out that starting to learn English before the ages of six to eight years old is better for developing pronunciation and grammar. However, those who start to learn English a little later, after the age of six to eight years, results in faster vocabulary growth and development of skills such as storytelling (Paradis et al., 2009). There is no age within the childhood years when it is 'too early' or 'too late' to learn another language (Paradis et al., 2009).

Socio-economic status has also been identified as one of the major contributing factors to language acquisition. A family's socio-economic status is measured primarily through the parents' levels of education and income (Paradis et al., 2009). Furthermore, children from affluent families where the parents have a tertiary institution education, tend to learn English faster because these parents often have higher language and literacy skills in their home language (Paradis et al., 2009).

Lastly, Paradis et al. (2009) state that quality and quantity of English exposure also plays a vital role in English language learning. Children may vary in the English they experience outside the classroom, and this in turn has a measurable impact on a child's development (Paradis et al., 2009). For example, the more books read in English and the more English-speaking peers they have, the more practice a child will have with English, and the more vocabulary they will build (Paradis et al., 2009).

Jong and Harper (2005) suggest that educators should be aware of the cross-lingual influence in L2 learning. The authors further point out that several studies have

demonstrated the discrepancy between L1 and L2 learning in writing processes, where the latter may be perceived as having deficits in writing or even cognitive ability rather than normal L2 developmental patterns.

More specifically Jong and Harper (2005) said

Students' knowledge of L1 writing conventions affects all areas of students' L2 writing, including punctuation and orthography, vocabulary selection and choice of cohesive devices, sentence structure and rhetorical patterns such as different interpretations of narrative or argumentative structures, genre, audience, or text organization (p. 108).

The current research study considered the above mentioned factors, which perhaps influence the acquisition of English as a second-language. According to the research objectives, this view was considered when investigating a potential difference in participation amongst L2 learners in the learning process when compared to their English-speaking peers.

2.11 Teaching second-language learners in English medium schools

Owen-Smith (2010) argues that former Whites-only schools have avoided the complication of language barriers by using English as a common language or LoLT. However, despite this disregard for linguistic diversity, it has inevitably resulted in a multicultural context within ex-Model C schools. Furthermore the author argues that "as long as home languages remain unused as a resource, equity and academic excellence will still be unattainable" (Owen-Smith, 2010, p. 33).

Paradis et al. (2009) state that children who learn English as a second-language do so systematically and at varying rates, according to their ability and developmental level. The understanding and application of this concept is imperative in the planning of suitable lessons and activities by educators. The authors suggest that it is the responsibility of the educator to mediate and facilitate the development of English amongst L2 learners (Paradis et al., 2009). However there seems to be a communication breakdown between educators and learners in ex-Model C classrooms that may require specialised intervention (Pluddemann, 1999).

In relation to the above, O'Connor and Geiger (2009) stated that a large proportion of South African learners who are bi-or multilingual and attend English medium schools. Additionally, these L2 learners are often incorrectly referred for speech-language therapy as a result of their English Language Proficiency being low (O' Connor & Geiger, 2009).

Furthermore according to Ntombela and Mhlongo (2010) the learning process may be experienced differently by L2 speakers if the MoI is English. It can be further argued that the conceptual ability and knowledge of learners is compromised when the LoLT and mother tongue of the child is not the same. Likewise Brock-Utne and Holmarsdottir (2004) suggest that parents of L2 learners “mistakenly think, however, that the best way to learn English is to have it as a language of instruction” (p. 70).

In light of the above points, this research study aimed to investigate the core research question which considers the challenges facing L2 learners who are being educated in English medium schools and manner in which these difficulties are being addressed.

2.12 Educator training

According to Bornman and Donohue (2013)

Educators were previously trained to teach either general education or special education classes. This has resulted in many South African teachers- particularly those who have been teaching for a number of years- having little to no training or experience with learners who experience educational barriers (p. 87)

Furthermore, Nkomo et al. (2004) pointed out that teachers, school management teams and communities at large are held responsible for, and thus must be adequately equipped to, promote a democratic school environment that addresses the needs of all learners. According to Probyn (2006) the lack of training amongst educators, appears to be a recurrent problem in developing countries. In addition such shortfalls are having a negative impact on the transformation objectives of the South African education system which includes access, equity, redress, participation and democracy, as discussed by Kgobe (1999 as cited in Probyn, 2006).

Likewise Pluddemann (1999) and Bornman and Donohue (2013) pointed out that in-service training initiatives are rarely available for educators in South Africa. The authors therefore recommend that ongoing educator development and training must be prioritized within the context of multicultural and inclusive education in South Africa (Bornman & Donohue, 2013; Pluddemann, 1999).

Probyn's (2006) study confirmed that there was a lack of training amongst educators who teach L2 learners in schools where the LoLT (English) was not their home language. The educators stated that "in their pre-service training, the assumption was that the learners were fully proficient in English and that lessons would be conducted solely in English- with little recognition of the breakdown between language policy and practice" (Probyn, 2006, p. 406). These ideas were shared by McCrary, Sennette and Brown (2011) who also emphasised the need for educators to be sufficiently prepared in meeting the educational needs of L2 learners during their pre-service training.

Similarly O'Connor and Geiger (2009) have emphasised the importance of appropriate educator training within the multilingual approach to education. More specifically the authors suggest that in the South African context educators require training in "bilingualism, second language acquisition and learning in a second language" which will allow them to develop a language awareness and sensitivity about how different environmental contexts which may include the home, community and school effect the learner (O'Connor and Geiger, 2009, p. 255).

Adequate and appropriate educator training would also highlight how subject knowledge is encoded in language and how the educator-learner interaction is shaped by language processes such as questioning, explaining and instruction-giving, as well as the role of textbooks (O'Connor & Geiger, 2009; Spaull, 2013).

In the study by Scarinci et al. (2015) the authors found the need for Foundation Phase educators to be trained in aspects of child language development as well as language promotion strategies which are clearly necessary when considering the educational needs of L2 learners. Furthermore Pluddemann (2000, as cited in Navsaria et al., 2011) identified a lack of appropriately qualified African-language speaking teachers in

schools such as ex-Model C institutions, where communication difficulties between teachers and learners seem to have arisen.

The current study considered whether educators who are currently practicing within former model-C schools, are in fact sufficiently trained and exposed to continuous professional development opportunities in order to accommodate for the needs of diverse learners.

2.13 The challenges of managing and assessing second-language learners

Vygotsky highlights a learner-centred approach to education which is found in South Africa. However he suggests that teachers must be able to mediate learning at the appropriate level of the child using various scaffolding methods; which may include modelling, feedback and instruction and question processes (Vandeyar & Amin, 2014; Vygotsky, 1978).

When planning and teaching lessons, a teacher must be familiar with the academic ability of the class and consider the lesson's implications of each child's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). According to Shaffer and Kipp (2007) an individual's ZPD is defined as "the difference between what a learner can accomplish independently and what he/she can accomplish with the guidance and encouragement of a more skilled partner" (p. 278). Within the Vygotskian paradigm, teachers should also aim to encourage group work activities where children can assist each other in the learning process as mediators (Donald et al., 2010; Donald et al., 2014).

Paradis et al. (2009) suggest that there is often a low expectation placed on young children in relation to their acquisition of English when learnt as a second language. When communicating with a L2 learner, simple one-word replies are often regarded as sufficient in displaying an understanding of the concepts taught. However this may lead to an incorrect perception of the child's ELP and provide an invalid assessment of their true understanding, by providing the answers they presume to be correct (Paradis et al., 2009).

Paradis et al. (2009) proposed that children gradually progress from memorized sentences to original, productive and spontaneous English conversation. "When young

children learning English can engage in conversational English, this does not mean that they have mastered the English language. In fact, their English often has errors in pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar, and these errors may last a long time” (Paradis et al., 2009, p.2).

Furthermore, O'Connor and Geiger (2009) emphasise that there are other difficulties that can arise when learning in a language either than your mother tongue. This includes issues of low self-esteem and poor confidence which in turn, may effect other areas of learning and functioning as a result of frustration, social isolation and even disciplinary problems.

This linguistic dilemma provides the gap in the research where studies on Foundation Phase learners have not been widely addressed, thus motivating the purpose of this research. The above points illustrate the purpose of this study which aimed to investigate the reality of L2 learners educational experiences, where they may be able to use English competently among peers within informal settings, however, they may not be proficient in the level of language required to fulfil the requirements set out in formal, written work.

2.14 Learner support strategies

2.14.1 Current expectations of South African schools

Oswald and de Villiers (2013) highlight the specific learning needs, learning styles and different methods of engaging with the teaching and learning process. In addition the authors highlight different levels of support required at various developmental levels, and the factors that influence a child's engagement in classroom activities (Howell, 2007 as cited in Oswald & de Villiers, 2013).

In light of the inclusive education approach, educators are expected to accommodate for the diversity of all learners which includes their specific learning needs within the classroom (Lazarus et al., 2007). The DoE (2010 as cited in Vandeyar & Amin, 2014) suggest that within culture-rich classrooms, active learning must be used as a teaching strategy where group work activities that target skills such as problem solving, group discussions and developing inter-personal skills are encouraged.

Pluddemann (1999) pointed out that “in terms of the South African Schools Act (1996), each public school via its governing body now has the responsibility for developing, together with the provincial education department, an appropriate language plan for the school” (p. 336).

Probyn (2006) explored many inventions used by educators in order to support the learning process for L2 learners. This included using methods such as encouraging class discussions to extend learners English vocabulary and using practical examples of concepts including visual aids, interactive worksheets (Probyn, 2006). Educators expressed that chalkboards are still an effective means of teaching and claimed that they still taught by writing notes, diagrams and illustrations on the chalkboard, as ways of consolidating new concept. (Probyn, 2006). In the context of minimal resources, learner support is found to be equally effective by using body language, role-play and humour to help L2 learners remember new concepts (Probyn, 2006).

Owen-Smith (2010) has urged the use of parallel-language texts which provide learners with explanations of concepts in both English and their mother tongue. These types of books can be beneficial in the development of subject-specific vocabulary where the learner’s knowledge of the two languages can systematically reinforce each other and result in an enhanced understanding (Owen-Smith, 2010). Pluddemann (1999) suggested that “schools themselves should be encouraged to invite bilingual members of the community (e.g., parents, retired teachers, students) to assist in the classroom on a voluntary basis, if they cannot afford to pay them” (p. 337).

More recently, in a study done by Maher (2012) the author found that when it came to literacy development, modern teaching techniques were effective. This included technology such as the use of the interactive whiteboard which creates a learner-centred educational environment, where children are able to facilitate each other’s learning by encouraging whole-group discussion as opposed to the traditional teacher-learner relationship.

The above points illustrate the importance that lie on schools to offer sufficient support for L2 learners by adequately exposing them to LoLT through mediation and developing their literacy skills. This research study aims to investigate if and how ex-

Model C schools within Pietermaritzburg are implementing such learner support strategies.

2.14.2 The multi-bilingual approach

According to the LiEP the DoE, recognises the linguistic diversity of South Africa as a “valuable national asset and hence is tasked, amongst other things, to promote multilingualism, the development of the official languages, and respect for all languages used in the country” (DoE, 1997, p.1).

Wright (2012) emphasises the importance of multilingualism in South Africa which should be fostered and developed within the schools across the nation. He further points out that during the schooling career there should be an emphasis on cultural authority amongst the large groups of children when there is sufficient contact time to promote multilingualism. Furthermore Pluddemann (1999) points out that the “use of all learners' languages, particularly of the social minority...stands the best chance of undercutting socio-ethnic stratification” (p. 338).

According to the study conducted by Lee (1996) there are two perspectives of multilingualistic or bilingual education. He stated that those who advocate for the approach believe that it promotes a better understanding of the content of school curriculum, whilst allowing for the language of the school and society, to be adequately learned (Wong, Fillmore & Valadez, 1986 as cited in Lee, 1996). On the other hand, the opponents of bilingual education, (those who support English-only instruction), believe that it unifies the country and ensures the learning of the common societal language (Lee, 1996).

Owen-Smith (2010) recommends an alternative to the manner in which language is addressed in South African classrooms. She suggests that schools can use the multi-bilingualism approach where two languages of LoLT can be used simultaneously during lessons. Owen-Smith (2010) also points out that this particular approach applies to all phases of education and has been found to be effective despite the linguistic background of the class educator (Owen-Smith, 2010). Within the South African context, Owen-Smith's (2010) proposed multi-bilingualism approach is characterized by learner-centred learning where scholars can engage, discuss and collaborate with

peers of the same home language, in order to develop critical thinking skills. In addition, they will also use a common language i.e. English, where educators would be able to facilitate the learning process (Owen-Smith, 2010).

Ultimately, learners can use a common language as well as their mother tongue as an interdependent LoLT, inspiring an effective cohesiveness within the classroom. This proposition as suggested by Owen-Smith (2010) is based on the ideas of Vygotsky (1978) and his understanding of the ZPD which he defined as “the distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers” (Vygotsky, 1978, p.34).

Using the principles of the multi-bilingualism model, this research study aimed to investigate the challenges that multiculturalism may present for a L2 learner within the context of an ex-Model C school. In addition it also aimed to investigate whether models such as the multi-bilingualism model are being implemented within ex-Model C schools in Pietermaritzburg and whether it was found to be effective as an intervention strategy.

2.14.3 An inter-disciplinary approach to the overcoming language barriers to learning

O'Connor and Geiger (2009) have proposed a collaboration of inter-disciplinary strategies to overcome barriers to learning within the South African context. These views were echoed by Mohangi (2015) who suggested that the collaboration of experts within professional learning communities is “vital to ensure ongoing professional development, mutual support and problem solving for teachers, educational psychologists, parents/caregivers and other professionals” (p.306).

The inter-disciplinary approach would provide schools with an effective multidimensional intervention with the relevant professional assistance that may result in the more accurate identification of key difficulties experienced by learners and the opportunity to appropriately resolve them (Mohangi, 2015; O'Connor & Geiger, 2009). More specifically, it is recommended that professionals from affiliated disciplines should work in synergy in order to promote effective learning amongst L2 learners and

subsequently prevent and treat academic difficulties pertaining to language (O' Connor & Geiger, 2009). The implementation of such strategies especially within the Foundation Phase of education can reduce the overload experienced by educators, provide early intervention at a developmentally appropriate level and utilise the skills of affiliated professionals where it is desperately needed. This may include the implementation of interventions such as speech-language therapy, occupational therapy, assessments by Educational Psychologists and language support programmes within the school context (Moonsamy & Kathard, 2015).

Moreover, according to the DoE (2001), “the most important way of addressing barriers arising from the curriculum is to ensure that the process of learning and teaching is flexible enough to accommodate different learning needs and styles” (p. 23). The curriculum which is constructed by policy-makers and government officials plays a vital role and should be flexible across all bands of education so that it is accessible to all learners, irrespective of their learning needs (DoE, 2001). The EWP6 has also proposed that assistance will be given to educators by allowing greater flexibility in their teaching methods and in the assessment of learning. In addition, illustrative learning programmes, learning support materials and newly developed assessment instruments should also be provided (DoE, 2001).

This research study aimed to investigate the current measures being implemented in ex-Model C schools in Pietermaritzburg. More specifically it looked into the learner support services available to learners that experience barriers to learning, with a specific interest in language challenges faced by L2 learners. Moreover this study considered the inter-disciplinary approach as a possible intervention strategy to more effectively address language barriers to learning.

2.15 Summary of literature review

The preceding sections began by discussing the Vygotsky's Socio-Cultural model which provided the theoretical basis upon which this study has been conducted. Thereafter it reviewed the various theories of language and language acquisition, highlighting the principles of Bilingualism and Myers-Scotton's Markedness model.

Next, the broader literature review provided a detailed explanation on the importance of language in relation to learning and development, indicating the necessity to investigate the challenges that may be facing L2 learners within the context of English medium, ex-Model C schools. More particularly it started by describing the South African education system, both past and present, highlighting relevant policies such as the EWP6, the LiEP and CAPS that are currently being implemented in schools. This study intended to discover any challenges within the context of ex-Model C Foundation Phase schooling in Pietermaritzburg and demonstrate the experiences of the educators and learners in accommodating for issues such as language barriers to learning, as a result of such policies.

Finally the literature review provided a broad discussion of the relevant empirical literature in relation to language barriers to learning, language acquisition and language development. Furthermore it also presented a number of learner support strategies that can be considered when assisting children who may experience language barriers to learning.

2.16 Conclusion

This chapter began by providing a discussion on the theoretical framework in which this research study was conducted. Thereafter it proceeded to describe the history and current state of the South African education system. It also discussed the documented results and academic findings of studies done on language which can be perceived as a barrier to learning.

The focus of the chapter was to highlight the importance of language in learning, as well as provide a synopsis of the complexities that surround educating L2 learners at ex-Model C schools. This section also identified language diversity as a barrier to learning and discussed its impact on learning and teaching in the classrooms. These points were linked to current literature, policies and theories. Furthermore this literature review also aimed to use the ideas, materials and experiences presented in this chapter to enhance the overall credibility of this current study.

This chapter illustrates that language diversity is a major barrier to learning that L2 learners face not just in South Africa, but throughout the world. It is a barrier that is

filtrated into the classroom from the broader influences of both the past and present South African society thus making it difficult to completely eliminate. This study demonstrates that educators are ultimately left responsible to manage the effects and manifestations of language diversity within the classroom and has provided a variety of findings that exemplify how these issues have been previously addressed.

The chapter concluded by providing various intervention strategies, as suggested by the literature that would specifically address language barriers within the classroom and the steps that could possibly be taken to ensure its success through monitoring and evaluation.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a discussion of the research methodology that was employed in this study to uncover the challenges faced by Foundation Phase educators who teach L2 English speakers in ex-Model C schools in Pietermaritzburg. A qualitative research design within the interpretative paradigm was used for this study. The views of six educators were recorded, transcribed and then analysed using thematic analysis. This chapter provides a detailed report of the steps taken to systemically conduct the current study. The chapter also discussed the research design, sampling technique, data collection method, data analysis approach as well as the ethical issues that were considered in this study.

3.2 Research design

This study aimed to investigate the experiences of Foundation Phase educators who teach L2 learners in ex-Model C schools within the Pietermaritzburg area. A qualitative research design was therefore employed within this study, in order to produce findings that provided rich, verbal descriptions of the participants' experiences rather than statistical data (Connor & Hearn, 2010; Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Thomas, 2013).

Terre Blanche, Kelly and Durrheim (2006a) stated that the qualitative form of research “describes and interprets people’s feelings and experiences in human terms rather than through quantification and measurement” (p. 272). Likewise, Creswell (2007 as cited in Connor & Hearn, 2010) suggested that qualitative research provides “an opportunity to ascribe meaning to social situations or problems that highlights the opinions of the participants, reflectivity of the researcher and a complex description and interpretation of the problem at hand” (p. 320).

This study was conducted within the interpretive research paradigm. According to De Vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delport (2010) the interpretive paradigm proposes that through language, participants can express their lived realities and give meaning to their experiences. Within the context of the present research the interpretive paradigm allowed the participants to freely discuss their subjective experiences and perceptions

of teaching L2 learners, in a manner that was empathic and interactional (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2006; Thomas 2013).

The information shared during each interview was regarded as the ontological truth of each participant from their respective life context (de Vos et al., 2010). Thus the interpretative paradigm was regarded as the most suitable paradigm for the intention of this study, as it allowed the researcher to investigate the educational context of the Foundation Phase in ex-Model-C schools from the constructed view of the participants (Thomas, 2013).

The objectives of the current study focused on describing and understanding the perceptions of Foundation Phase educators when faced with linguistic diversity in Pietermaritzburg ex-Model C classrooms. Therefore, this particular study required a qualitative research design that focused on a descriptive, explorative approach (Holliday, 2012; Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Terre Blanche et al., 2006a; Thomas, 2013). Hence, adopting a qualitative research design for this study was regarded as most suitable, as it satisfied the objectives of the study where the subjective experiences of the educators were prioritized. More specifically, qualitative studies tend to access more in-depth experiences of the individuals' experiences and can provide "thick descriptions of the data" through methods such as the one-on-one interview (Silverman, 2000, p. 176).

The researcher invited Foundation Phase educators from local ex-Model C schools to use the project as an opportunity to describe their experiences and express their personal opinions about teaching children of linguistic diversity (Terre Blanche et al., 2006a; Thomas, 2013). In addition the qualitative research approach provided the opportunity for the researcher and interviewees to present a statement about the reality of the linguistically diverse classrooms in Pietermaritzburg and explore the possibility of sharing that knowledge with academics and other education specialists (Holliday, 2012; Thomas, 2013).

The researcher identified some important qualities of qualitative research that greatly contributed to the fulfilment of this research project (Terre Blanche et al., 2006a). Firstly the qualitative approach was able to recognize potentially important factors

within the study, through detailed discussions and follow-up questions during the interview process. Secondly, it also exposed further research interests that could be pursued by the researcher at a later stage (Holliday, 2012). Lastly, it added a realistic experience to the research by allowing vital descriptions of daily experiences and perceptions of educators within their professional environment (Terre Blanche et al., 2006a). These three essential features of the qualitative approach, as proposed by Terre Blanche et al. (2006a) proved to be fundamental in the investigation and identification of the factors involved in the experiences of Foundation Phase teachers who educate L2 learners in ex-Model C schools (Holliday, 2012; Terre Blanche et al., 2006a).

This study was conducted under the inductive exploration method, to discover the essential factors underlying the experiences of Foundation Phase educators, which were initially unknown (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2006). Terre Blanche and Durrheim (2006) clarified that within the inductive approach, “the researcher starts with a set of vague speculations about a research question and tries to make sense of the phenomenon by observing a set of particular incidences... or conducts a series of interviews... to see common themes and patterns emerging” (p.7). Likewise, Connor and Hearn (2010) stated that inductive research reveals new ways of understanding and focuses on developing generalizations about the research topic rather than forming new hypotheses.

3.3 Sampling

For the purposes of this study, the sample that was required involved a grouping of specific individuals (Boyatzis, 1998). More specifically the key requirement was that all participants should be qualified Foundation Phase educators from local ex-Model C schools in Pietermaritzburg who were over the age of 18 years so that no consent, except their own, was necessary. The participants also required mental and legal competency in order to partake in the study (Wassenaar, 2006; Wassenaar & Mamotte, 2012). These details were confirmed verbally between the researcher and the participant during the recruitment phase of data collection.

The sampling for this study was made on the basis of availability, i.e. convenience sampling; although due to the specific nature of the study, it also had elements of purposive and snowball sampling (Durrheim, 2006; Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Sandelowski (2000) pointed out that “the ultimate goal of purposeful sampling is to obtain cases deemed information-rich for the purposes of study” (p.338).

At the initial stages of recruiting participants for the study, the researcher had existing access to a suitable sample group, who were potentially available to participate in the study. These prospective participants were known to the researcher on a short-term professional basis, thus reducing the effects of researcher bias and promoting collaborative partnership between the community and researcher (Boyatzis, 1998; Wassenaar & Mamotte, 2012). The researcher also considered that the potential participants may have known other suitable individuals who would agree to participate, if additional participants were required (Kelly, 2006).

The educators known to the researcher had been identified as suitable participants for this study during the researcher’s experience as a Foundation Phase educator. More specifically the researcher observed the linguistic challenges faced particularly by English-speaking educators who taught L2 learners in the Foundation Phase of ex-Model C schools. It was interesting to note that the majority of the educators observed were monolingual. Furthermore some of them often relied on other L2 learners (who had a better proficiency in English) to assist those who had lower levels of ELP and battled to grasp concepts taught during lessons, perhaps due to language barriers to learning.

This study was conducted on the basis of the participants’ eagerness to partake in the study. The educators were asked to participate in this study on a purely voluntary basis. The researcher provided each participant with a token of appreciation for agreeing to participate in the study. This was done by offering refreshments to the participants after the interview had been conducted (Wassenaar & Mamotte, 2012). This idea was based on Strydom’s (2011) advice that compensation should be considered when inviting participants to engage in a research study. There were no obvious factors that increased the vulnerability of the participants or increased their susceptibility during or after this study.

After obtaining ethical clearance from the UKZN Research Ethics Committee (see Appendix 1), the researcher approached the potential sample group directly; as she

already had access to a suitable sample group. The educators were invited to participate in the current research study via text messaging and E-mail, where they were asked to contact the researcher if they were interested and willing to partake in the study (see Appendix 3). This means of recruiting gave the potential participants the opportunity to feel that they were voluntarily participating in the research, and they need not to feel compelled to participate if they were unavailable (Wassenaar & Mamotte, 2012).

The intended aim of the study was to investigate educators' perceptions of the challenges facing L2 learners in the Foundation Phase of ex-Model C schools in Pietermaritzburg. This meant that the required sample were to be qualified Foundation Phase educators who were teaching in ex-Model C schools in Pietermaritzburg at the time of the study. However due to complications regarding the recruitment of participants, these expectations were not completely satisfied. These difficulties included issues such as the unavailability of participants during the data collection period and/or their unwillingness to participate in the study. Therefore one of the participants did not belong to the intended sample group. However, she did have eight years of teaching experience as a Grade R teacher and still teaches Foundation Phase learners at her private tutoring institution.

This study recruited six participants who were qualified Foundation Phase educators that teach L2 learners in ex-Model C schools where the MoI is English. The researcher chose this particular sample size due to the time constraints set to complete this research project. Furthermore the sample size was deemed adequate as a sufficient amount of data was drawn, that was later analysed and discussed in relation to the research topics (Boyatzis, 1998, Durrheim, 2006; Maxwell, 1992; Maxwell, 2004; Miles & Huberman, 1994).

The current study also did not necessitate a large sample of participants to make inferences about the objectives of the study, because the data collected only pertained to a particular group of people, i.e., Foundation Phase educators who teach L2 learners in ex-Model C schools in Pietermaritzburg (Durrheim, 2006; Maxwell, 1992; Maxwell, 2004; Miles & Huberman, 1994). This is consistent with the views of Connor and Hearn (2010) who suggested that "the logic of a sample size is related to the purpose,

the research problem, the major data collection strategy and the availability of the information-rich cases” (p. 328).

The following table presents the demographics of the sample group who participated in this study.

Table 1

Demographics of the Participants

Total number of Participants	6
Race	White 3 Indian 2 African 1
Gender	All Female
Qualification	All qualified Foundation Phase educators
Average age of participants	47 years old
Average years of teaching experience	22 years

Participant 1 is a White English-speaking female. She is 50 years old and previously taught Grade R at a local Junior Primary School for eight years. She is currently the co-owner of a private tutoring institution where she teaches Maths and English to learners from Grade 1-12. Participant 2 is an English-speaking Indian female. She is 57 years old with 35 years teaching experience. She currently serves as a Head of Department and Grade 3 teacher at a local ex-Model C school. Participant 3 is an Afrikaans first-language speaker, who is a White female with 29 years teaching experience. She is 51 years old and teaches Grade 2 at a local boys' school.

Participant 4 is the only African female in the study. Her mother tongue is Sesotho. She is 28 years old with four years teaching experience and is currently teaching Grade 3. Participant 5 has 31 years of teaching experience. She is 54 years old and is a White, English-speaking female who teaches Grade 3. Participant 6 has been teaching for the past 22 years and is currently with Grade 3. She is a 43 year old, Indian female who is English-speaking.

3.4 Data collection

All the data collection was carried out by the researcher. The semi-structured interview was used as a data collection method (Sandelowski, 2000; Thomas, 2013). This method was identified as the most effective method to obtain qualitative data for this study, which focused on the subjective experiences of Foundation Phase teachers who educate L2 learners in ex-Model C schools, where the MoI is English (Holliday, 2012; Sandelowski, 2000).

The semi-structured interview proved to be an effective means of collecting information on the research topic, whilst allowing for the development of rapport and empathy between researcher and interviewee (Kelly, 2006; Thomas, 2013). The semi-structured interview provided participants with the platform to express their opinions openly through dialogue, which provided the researcher with the opportunity to engage with the participants in an interactive manner that may have been restricted in a quantitative research approach (Thomas, 2013). In addition the respective semi-structured interviews allowed for open-ended questions that lead to descriptive, lengthy and interactive discussions of the research topic from the perspective of each participant, which allowed the researcher to further engage with the topic in an interactive manner (Holliday, 2012).

The measure for this study included a semi-structured interview schedule of approximately twenty questions that investigated the research questions (see Appendix 2). The prospective questions were based on the research done for the literature review of this research study. Furthermore, the researcher integrated various types of interview questions that included a mixture of introductory questions, direct questions, indirect questions and interpreting questions that could draw sufficient data during the interview process (Kvale, 1999; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Thomas 2013).

All six participants were required to dedicate approximately an hour of their time for this study and were interviewed individually at a location of their convenience and preference. This technique was highlighted by Connor and Hearn (2010) who pointed out the importance of allowing participants to choose the time and venue for the interview in order to establish trust. At the introductory stages of the interview process, the researcher was able to develop valuable rapport with the participants, as a result of

her qualifying as a Foundation Phase teacher too. This common interest between the researcher and participant allowed for better quality data and empathy (Thomas, 2013).

Prior to the formal interview, the researcher verbally clarified the purpose of the research project to each participant and explained the implications of any information given. She also asked for permission to use a tape recorder during the interview (Strydom, 2011) (see Appendix 4). More importantly the researcher assured each participant that the study would be conducted under complete anonymity, which meant that their names and the names of their schools would never be mentioned; and that any further identifying information that was shared would remain completely confidential (Strydom, 2011).

The participants were made entirely aware of all aspects of the study, and no form of deception had been used. This was to order to assure a trustworthy relationship and data quality (Connor & Hearn, 2010). In addition the researcher clarified that should any participant feel uncomfortable and choose to discontinue with the research study, they could withdraw from the interview at any given time without any form of penalty (Wassenaar & Mamotte, 2012). All information given during the introductory stages, as well as the agreement made between the researcher and participant, was then formalized in a written consent form (see Appendix 4). Thereafter, the researcher proceeded to conduct the interview whilst recording it on a tape recorder.

During the course of the interviews, follow-up, probing, specifying and silence were often used in order to clarify certain responses or gain additional information (Kvale, 1999; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). In addition, the researcher included the use of the semi-structured interview schedule (see Appendix 2) which allowed her to remain organised throughout the interview process and ensured a well-prepared sequence to the interview whilst remaining flexible. The researcher also made field notes during the interviews to maintain understanding and highlight key points that would later contribute to the data analysis process (Kvale, 1999; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

Kvale's (1999) identified characteristics of a valuable interview were deeply considered when conducting the respective interviews. The researcher ensured that she drew long, detailed, rich and thick descriptions and responses from the interviewee whilst

maintaining short and precise questions. The clarification of certain points and follow-ups of the participants' responses as well as active interpretation and engagement throughout the interview process was considered as vital. Lastly, the interviewer ensured the verification of their understanding and allowed the interview to be self-communicating to reduce further descriptions and explanations (Kvale, 1999; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009).

3.5 Data analysis

The data analysis of this study took the form of thematic analysis of the transcribed data from the interview process (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Terre Blanche et al., 2006b). More specifically Braun and Clarke (2006) explained that "thematic analysis involves the searching across a data set be that a number of interviews or focus groups, or a range of texts to find repeated patterns of meaning" (p.86). Furthermore thematic analysis was used to provide a direct understanding of the participants' subjective experiences and relate what is real for them (Sandelowski, 2000; Terre Blanche et al., 2006b).

The process of thematic analysis provided the opportunity for meaning-making in order to unravel the meaning behind the particular experiences of the participants within their context. This was achieved through personal interaction and listening to their perspectives on the research topic at hand (Terre Blanche et al., 2006b). Terre Blanche et al. (2006b) described thematic analysis as a form of qualitative research that is primarily used to collect and later analyse what is perceived as the truth by the participants; by harnessing and extending the power of ordinary language and expression. Furthermore, it provides first-hand accounts that are rich in detail which assists the researcher in understanding the research topic in a realistic context (Terre Blanche et al., 2006b; Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The following section explains that five major steps involved in the data analysis of this study suggested by Terre Blanche et al. (2006b):

Step 1: Familiarisation and immersion

After all six interviews had been conducted and transcribed into text form; the researcher began to actively engage with the information at hand. This involved listening to the audio tapes from the respective interviews as well as reading the

transcripts several times. Through these activities, the researcher was able to familiarize herself with the audio recordings of the text, as she worked consistently together with her field notes from the respective interviews (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Silverman, 2000; Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Terre Blanche et al., 2006b). This stage of data analysis gave the researcher the opportunity to make new notes and consult with her field notes to adequately conceptualise the data in terms of the research objectives (Silverman, 2000; Terre Blanche et al., 2006b).

Step 2: Inducing themes

After actively engaging with the transcribed data for an extended period, the researcher began to categorize the themes which emerged within the research study (Boyatzis, 1998). Many of the themes that emerged ‘naturally’ from the data were concepts that the study had aimed to identify (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Terre Blanche et al., 2006b). The researcher began the research study by expecting specific themes to emerge in light of the literature review which focused on aspects such as the complex educational policies in South Africa, the importance of language in learning etc. However, as this was an inductive study, the researcher was also open to new themes emerging from the data (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 2006).

Step 3: Coding

The next step of the thematic analysis of the data involved the coding process (Boyatzis, 1998). This method was used to effectively classify the data and relate it to the perspective of the intended study (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Sandelowski, 2000; Terre Blanche et al., 2006b). By using colour codes, the researcher was able to identify particular categories of information that were grouped together to clarify the themes that emerged from the research study. This process of coding allowed additional definition of new sub-themes and fresh aspects of previously unconsidered data that were emphasised later in the data analysis process (Sandelowski, 2000; Terre Blanche et al., 2006b). Short hand notes were also made throughout this process to identify the specific themes and categorise them (Terre Blanche et al., 2006b).

Step 4: Elaboration

Terre Blanche et al. (2006b) suggested that the stage of elaboration can be used as a more rigorous type of coding, where data could be additionally explored until no

further new material or sub-themes can be found. This penultimate stage of interpretative analysis of the data provided the researcher with the chance to ensure that she was comfortable with the structuring of the material and that she had adequately satisfied all their research objectives (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Terre Blanche et al., 2006b).

Step 5: Interpretation and checking

Finally, in order to complete the data analysis process, the researcher was required to construct an interpretation of the study (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This was essentially “a written account of the phenomenon...studied” which was developed through integrating the themes found in the previous stages of the data analysis process (Terre Blanche et al., 2006b, p. 326). In addition, the researcher was able to critically analyse the information presented by looking for any potential contradictions, over-interpretations or trivial misunderstandings that could have occurred (Maxwell, 1992; Maxwell, 2004; Terre Blanche et al., 2006b).

This ultimate stage also allowed the researcher to reflect on their own personal involvement in gathering and analysing the data, as perfect objectivity was not expected (Terre Blanche et al., 2006b). The final results of these analyses are reported in the following chapter (Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Terre Blanche et al., 2006b).

The following section will discuss the ethical considerations applied in this particular study. Moreover it will provide the comprehensive explanation of the steps taken to ensure that the present research was conducted in an appropriate manner.

3.6 Ethical considerations

Due to the personally intrusive nature of qualitative research ethical guidelines including informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity, privacy and caring must be taken into consideration (Boyatzis, 1998; Connor & Hearn, 2010). Furthermore, the inclusion of human beings as the objects of study brings about a variety of complex ethical dilemmas (Boyatzis, 1999; Strydom, 2011). Wassenaar (2006) proposed four essential ethical concerns that should be taken into consideration when conducting research. This includes autonomy and respect for the dignity of persons, nonmaleficence, beneficence and justice.

Connor and Hearn (2010) stated that prior to conducting any form of research, researchers must recognize the vulnerability of the participants and ensure that they gain their trust and respect their rights throughout all the stages of the study. Before the interview process, the researcher of this study addressed this issue by allowing each participant the opportunity to learn more about the research. She systematically explained the purpose of the study and the implications of any information given.

As suggested by Wassenaar (2006) the principle of autonomy and respect for the dignity of persons, was assured through the agreement of complete confidentiality and anonymity between the researcher and each participant that guaranteed privacy during the entire research process. More specifically, anonymity during this study was addressed by allocating a pseudonym to each participant throughout the course of the research process, i.e. the participants' authentic names were never mentioned. These ideas are also consistent with the views of Connor and Hearn (2010) who stated that research participants should not be identifiable in print and that it was the researcher's responsibility to guard the identity of the participant as well as the institution to which they belonged.

After this brief introduction, the above mentioned information that was expressed verbally was then formalized in a written consent form that was signed by each participant (see Appendix 4) (Connor & Hearn, 2010). Furthermore Strydom (2011) explained that informed consent is vital during any form of research, as people have the right to decide what can and cannot happen to them when participating in a study.

In keeping with this, the participants were told that they were free to withdraw from the interview at any given time should they have felt uncomfortable to continue, without any form of penalty (Wassenaar & Mamotte, 2012). However none of the participants exercised this right. In addition, there were no costs for the educators to participate in this study except for time constraints and their effort. Furthermore, the researcher ensured that each participant understood their rights within the study and promoted a sense of fairness and caring (Connor & Hearn, 2010).

According to principle of beneficence, this research project provided the educators with the opportunity to share their experiences of teaching L2 learners in the Foundation Phase of ex-Model C schools in Pietermaritzburg (Wassenaar, 2006; Wassenaar & Mamotte, 2012). This study hopes to contribute to the research done in this particular field and to future studies done on language barriers to learning or perhaps a comparative study of schools in South Africa. Moreover this study aims to firstly inform policy-makers, relevant stakeholders and government on the challenges facing L2 learners in English Medium schools. Secondly it aims to highlight the current measures that are being implemented in order to address these particular difficulties and its effectiveness.

In terms of the ethical principle of justice, there were no obvious factors that may have increased the vulnerability of the participants or increased their susceptibility to harm after or during this study. These risks may have included any obvious physical, psychological, legal or social risks or harms after or during this study (Wassenaar, 2006; Wassenaar & Mamotte, 2012).

Additionally all data collected during this research study will be kept for five years and will be stored purely for research purposes. The participants of this study have given permission for any further use of their data, which was discussed and included in the Informed Consent Form (see Appendix 4). This study required no specific evaluation, assessment or treatment procedure before or after the interview process for the participants.

The next section will discuss how the credibility, dependability and transferability of this study were ensured.

3.7 Credibility, Dependability and Transferability

Due to the very nature of qualitative research, there is often a lack of objectivity from both participants and researchers during the interview process. This ultimately leads to the complexity of true validity, reliability and generalizability within qualitative research (Lewis & Ritchie, 2003; Shenton, 2004).

3.7.1 Credibility

Creswell (1998) emphasizes the importance of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability in qualitative studies. He presents eight procedures of verification, rather than validity, which can be used in a qualitative research design. This includes triangulation, member checks, peer review or debriefing, external audits, a prolonged engagement and persistent observation of participants, negative case analysis, clarifying researcher bias and rich, thick descriptions of data (Creswell, 1998). Within this particular study only a selection of these techniques was used to ensure the credibility of the study, mostly due to a lack of resources (Golafshani, 2003; Lewis & Ritchie, 2003).

The researcher used the debriefing technique by consulting with her supervisor as well as individuals who did not have a direct link to this study (Creswell, 1998). The researcher also constructed the interview schedule (see Appendix 2) in direct relation to the research topic at hand (Thomas, 2013). This ensured that the questions asked during the interview process aimed at answering the research questions. In addition the use of rich, thick descriptions of data was ensured through the semi-structured interview which allowed the participants to explain themselves fully. Finally, the researcher ensured good quality recording and transcription of interviews (Golafshani, 2003; Shenton, 2004; Silverman, 2000).

3.7.2 Dependability

According to Silverman (2000) the dependability of qualitative data lies in the ability to record and transcribe good quality interviews. The dependability of the data presented in this research study was ensured during the interview process where questions were cross-checked with each other in order to maintain consistency. The researcher also used probing questions in order to seek clarity of information given by the interviewees thus sustaining dependability (Golafshani, 2003; Kvale, 1999; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Lewis & Ritchie, 2003; Shenton, 2004; Thomas, 2013).

3.7.3 Transferability

Transferability within a study aims to identify the generalizability of the sampling used. Due to the qualitative nature of this study, the results could not be generalisable to the general population. However the findings would be transferable to a population with

similar characteristics of the sample that was recruited for the study (Golafshani, 2003; Maxwell, 1992; Maxwell, 2004; Shenton, 2004). The researcher acknowledges the limited transferability of this particular study due to the sampling technique used to recruit the participants. Furthermore considerable effort was made to ensure good quality transcriptions (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Golafshani, 2003; Lewis & Ritchie, 2003; Strauss & Corbin, 1990; Terre Blanche et al., 2006b).

3.8 Conclusion

This chapter has clearly and systematically described the methodology that was used to conduct the current study. It can be concluded from the points illustrated above that a qualitative research design proved to be the most suitable design that best satisfied the objectives of the study. Furthermore this chapter has given details of the sampling techniques used to recruit the participants for this study, whilst highlighting the ethical issues that needed to be taken into consideration. It also provided a detailed account of the data collection process and specific method of data analysis used to develop the results section of the study, which will be presented in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter provided a detailed account of the research methodology used within the current study. This chapter presents the findings of this study, according to the themes that emerged during analysis. These results are integrated to summarise the key findings of the study. Furthermore, these themes are presented in order of the research questions as outlined in Chapter 1.

Six main themes were identified in the analysis of the data. These overarching themes included the development of local ex-Model C schools post-apartheid; multiculturalism including linguistic diversity in English medium schools; language as a barrier to teaching and learning; English language competency amongst L2 learners in ex-Model C schools, teaching methods and assessment amongst L2 learners in English medium schools and lastly the current learner support strategies implemented at ex-Model C schools in Pietermaritzburg to alleviate language barriers to learning.

4.2 The development of ex-Model C primary schools in Pietermaritzburg since 1994

The first theme that emerged from the data related to the development of ex-Model C primary schools in Pietermaritzburg since 1994. Under this theme, five sub-themes emanated, which are the racial transformation of ex-Model C schools, the demographics of Foundation Phase learners in ex-Model C schools, prevalence of L2 learners in the Foundation Phase at ex-Model C schools, the demographics of Foundation Phase educators at ex-Model C schools and the language competency of educators at ex-Model C schools. These sub-themes are presented individually below.

4.2.1 The racial transformation of ex-Model C schools

The participants of this study observed a distinct racial transformation in local ex-Model C primary schools since the post-apartheid era. In addition all the participants emphasised that there is currently far more Black African children in ex-Model C classrooms, as opposed to their White, Coloured and Indian peers. Some participants

specified that the development of racially integrated schools was not sudden, but as each year passed the number of racially diverse learners grew.

P5: I find it very interesting because it was a majority white school. Maybe, 60-40 but still majority white but it is probably becoming an 80-20 change now.

P6: When I first got there 16 years ago, there was 50-50. You know, there was a balance. I would say at the moment there are 99% Blacks in our school.

This study aimed to explore the dynamics of multiculturalism within ex-Model C schools in Pietermaritzburg. The sub-theme above indicates the significance of this particular investigation due to the increasing enrolment of non-White learners in ex-Model C schools that are driven by western ideology.

4.2.2 The demographics of foundation phase learners in ex-Model C schools

According to the findings of this study, the age of a Foundation Phase learner ranged from 7-10 years old. In addition, the average class size ranged from 21-29 children, with most having an equal difference between girls and boys. The participants also mentioned that socio-economic factors play a significant role in determining which non-White learners attend ex-Model C schools. They further pointed out that most of the non-White children, who attend former Whites-only schools, usually come from an affluent background.

P2: The (non-White) learners, coming to an ex-Model C school compared to (other government schools)...their parents can afford to send them to those schools. And I think they are exposed to much more, compared to your ordinary, you know, lower income citizens.

P6: Most of the children who come to our school, okay... their parents are teachers or policeman, nurses, Ummm... lots of them are working in professional jobs but, there are some that are domestic workers and they work in garages and things like that.

The following table provides a preview of the demographic spread of learners, according to race, within each participant's class.

Table 2

Racial spread of the learners in each participant's class

Race	Number of learners					
	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6
African	80%	3	5	19	9	27
White		7	15	0	8	2
Indian		8	3	8	12	0
Coloured		3	2	1	0	0

Note. P= Participant

Most of the participants in this study pointed out that the majority of the learners in their class were of African descent. However one participant said that she had a majority of White learners in her class and another had a majority of Indian learners.

As stated in the section above, this study intended to investigate multiculturalism in ex-Model C schools in Pietermaritzburg. The sub-theme above addresses this concern and clearly illustrates the diverse demographics of Foundation Phase learners in selected ex-Model C schools, further highlighting the prevalence of multiculturalism within the Pietermaritzburg context.

4.2.3 Prevalence of second-language learners in the foundation phase at ex-Model C schools

Most of the participants pointed out that a large portion of their class were L2 learners, most of whom were isiZulu HL speakers. Conversely fewer participants explained that only a small percentage of their classes were L2 learners. Furthermore, some participants highlighted that only a minority of their L2 learners spoke other national languages that included Afrikaans, Sesotho and isiXhosa. Other participants reported to have foreign national learners in their respective classes whose home language although African was not familiar to any of them. These respective learners were from Sudan, Nigeria and Zimbabwe.

P1: They mainly speak isiZulu but we do have a small percentage of them that are our other national languages. And we also have some that are from out of country.

P3: Most of the second-language learners in my class speak isiZulu or Afrikaans and one speaks Arabic.

P6: Their home language is usually isiZulu and I have two learners who are from Zimbabwe and they speak Shona.

This study aimed to investigate the perceived needs of L2 learners and the challenges of multiculturalism within the ex-Model C schooling context. The results above highlight the prevalence of linguistic diversity in ex-Model C schools where L2 learners should receive support and be appropriately accommodated for by the local schooling system which is largely driven by western ideology.

4.2.4 The demographics of foundation phase educators at ex-Model C schools

This study identified limited demographic diversity amongst educators in the Foundation Phase of selected ex-Model C schools in Pietermaritzburg. All the participants pointed out that White females dominated the Foundation Phase Staff at their respective schools. The participants further explained that most of these educators were also well-experienced (with an average of 20 years teaching experience) with only a few being young or newly qualified. Some of the participants indicated that they had not yet worked with any non-White Foundation Phase educators during their years of service. One participant clarified that although there was limited diversity amongst the Foundation Phase staff, the Senior Primary was far more diverse in terms of gender and race.

P3: In the past it was obviously, mainly White... before 1994. But then we did start getting other races, not a lot though

P4: Well with the Junior Primary, gender...majority is female. There is only one Indian teacher and I'm the only Black teacher... and then the rest of the ladies, they are White

P5: We are all females...most of us are in the range of having taught for the last 20 years. In the Junior Primary section we have one Indian teacher, and one Black and the rest are Whites. In the Senior Primary section we have Indians, Coloureds as well as Black teachers.

This study explored the dynamics of multiculturalism in ex-Model C schools in Pietermaritzburg. The sub-theme above addresses this research question by identifying the limited demographic diversity amongst educators in the Foundation Phase of selected ex-Model C schools in Pietermaritzburg, despite the increasing enrolment of L2 learners in the same schools.

4.2.5 Language competency of educators at ex-Model C schools

The following table provides an outline of the self-rated language proficiency amongst the participants in selected national languages.

Table 3

Self-rated language proficiency scores amongst educators in known national languages

Participant	Home Language	Afrikaans	isiZulu	Sesotho
1	English	10/10	3/10	
2	English	3/10		
3	Afrikaans	10/10		
4	Sesotho	7/10	10/10	10/10
5	English	5/10		
6	English	4/10		

Participant 4 who is a Sesotho mother tongue speaker showed the most extensive self-rated language proficiency when compared to the other participants. Participant 1 rated herself as having full proficiency in Afrikaans and some proficiency in isiZulu.

Participants 2, 5 and 6 (who are all first language English speakers) rated themselves with the least language proficiency in other national languages. Participant 3 who is an Afrikaans speaker rated herself as proficient in her home language and English.

The findings above indicate some of the challenges that multiculturalism may present within ex-Model C schools. More specifically it shows that the language competency amongst learners and educators of the selected Pietermaritzburg schools differ, which may contribute to the language barriers experienced in the teaching and learning process.

4.3 Multiculturalism including linguistic diversity in English medium schools

The second theme identified in the data was multiculturalism which included linguistic diversity in English medium schools. Under this theme three sub-themes emerged which included the following: the management of diversity in the multicultural classroom, the value of teaching learners in English and the school rules regarding the use of another HL at English medium schools.

4.3.1 The management of diversity in the multicultural classroom

The majority of the participants felt that they were inadequately trained to manage the diversity of a multicultural classroom. Almost all of the participants were trained during the apartheid era. Furthermore, these participants stated that their training did not equip them to deal with the educational transformation that has occurred over the past twenty years.

P2: I was trained under the apartheid system and we had no training after that. You know...like how to deal with the multicultural groups in the classroom. It is through my experience and my love for teaching, I think, that has helped me overcome any challenges I may have faced.

P5: I think that it didn't prepare me for the culture shock. It still is a culture shock to be presented with a child who doesn't understand something that we take for granted...you know... you are blind-sided.

An educator that has qualified more recently explained:

P4: I knew I would have challenges and stuff but I didn't know to what extent. It's just different when it is your own class and you get to know the child and even their family, background and everything.

Another participant claimed that her in-service training, in the form of workshops as well as her ability to be adaptable, is the key to effectively managing a multicultural classroom.

P3: The schools have been very good with, you know...keeping us up-to-date with new methods and we also go for training and workshops.

The participant quoted in the extract above, further explained that she adjusts her teaching techniques every year. This ensures that her teaching style and methodologies are relevant to the current learners' specific needs. Similar views were shared by most of the other participants who have adapted to the demands of multicultural teaching in the ex-Model C context.

The findings presented above demonstrate some of the challenges that are experienced by educators who work within the multicultural context of ex-Model C schooling. Moreover, it further speaks to the research questions which firstly aim to investigate some of the challenges that multiculturalism may present for both learners and educators in the ex-Model C school. Secondly, to identify the experiences of educators in relation to linguistic diversity when it comes to developing appropriate teaching methods and techniques.

4.3.2 The value of teaching second-language learners in English

Most of the participants proposed that teaching L2 learners in English provided them with an opportunity to expand their knowledge and vocabulary in the language.

P1: They are hearing more, they seeing more, they reading more of that language (English). So it would expand their vocabulary base.

P5: Yes, well the more they exposed they are to a language, the more proficient they will become in that language. However, to keep reverting to their home language, to explain things- they will never listen to the English

Another participant explained that teaching L2 learners in English was hugely beneficial when it came to basic literacy. She believed that it provided the children with the essential tools to learn and develop their general knowledge as well as gain better access to future learning and career opportunities. This was further expanded as follows:

P2: Those (L2) children are from parents who have chosen to come to schools like that (English Medium ex-Model C schools), because they are bent on the child learning English.

Notably, one participant felt that although many L2 learners benefit from their exposure to English at ex-Model C schools, the children still required additional learning support. She further explained that many of L2 learners battle to grasp the conceptual foundations of the language.

P4: I also feel that they do not understand the language so they need to have an extra class like a language enrichment class or whatever to help them understand. Because it is pointless teaching them the language, but they don't understand.

The findings above emphasise an important perception amongst Foundation Phase educators who value the importance of teaching L2 learners in English. This view further highlights the importance of providing appropriate learning support for L2 learners with barriers to learning in order for them to achieve academically.

These results address several research questions. Firstly that which intends to investigate the perceptions of ex-Model C educators. Secondly, to investigate the effects of language diversity on subject content, teaching methods and management and need for appropriate learner support in inclusive schools.

4.3.3 The school rules regarding use of another Home Language at English medium schools

The current study identified varied school rules regarding the use of HL amongst L2 learners in English medium schools. Some participants suggested that their schools had an open policy on the matter.

P2: I wouldn't mind if they speak but generally they don't. Because they like to stick to English but what we do notice is that sometimes if they are speaking to each other, out of the classroom then they will use their home language.

P3: You know it's actually strange that you say that. Because in the beginning... the boys, you know....when we started integrating, they did that a lot. But these days they don't. They speak English.

On the other hand, other participants confirmed that their schools had implemented a stricter English-only policy during school hours. This regulation emphasised the need for a common language at school and efforts to improve the L2 learners' ELP.

P4: It's a rule because other children don't understand if they speak in another language. They are only allowed to speak isiZulu or Afrikaans during that lesson. At other times, it's English only.

P5: To stop them speaking their home language is very difficult. You know we enforce the English only rule for a few hours because if they only speak English at school, their language would obviously become so much better. But because they are mostly interacting with their friends (of the same HL), they most likely go back...well it would be natural to speak their home language.

The findings presented above illustrate the challenges experienced within the multicultural context of ex-Model C schooling, in terms of classroom and diversity management. More specifically the study found that there are varied school rules regarding the use of HL amongst L2 learners in English medium schools which is driven by policy.

4.4 Language as a barrier to Learning and Teaching

The third major theme that emerged from the data was language as a barrier to teaching and learning. This theme is emanated under two sub-themes. Firstly, this included language as a barrier to learning for L2 educators and learners in ex-Model C schools and secondly, the manifestation of language barriers in the practical learning context. These sub-themes are presented separately below:

4.4.1 Language as a barrier for second-language educators and learners in ex-Model C schools

The current study had some participants who represented L2 educators in the sample group. More specifically, one participant reported experiencing no significant language barriers as a L2 educator teaching at an English medium school. Another participant further suggested that her broader linguistic ability actually assisted her in coping better with teaching L2 learners.

P3: There are times when I doubt myself, but also through these many years I have overcome it.

P4: So it does help me that I can speak isiZulu...because some children who don't understand, I do try explain to them individually in their language.

The participants of this study had mixed views on whether language was perceived as being a barrier to learning amongst the L2 learners. Some of the participants felt that language barriers to learning are prevalent amongst L2 learners within the ex-Model C school context.

P1: Yes, it does because the language of instruction, in most of the schools that they (L2 learners) are attending is English. So they are coming in, to a language of instruction that they are not proficient in.

P4: He doesn't understand the words and he can't read them...it's not a case of him not knowing the work; he just cannot understand what it means.

P5: If you want to learn in English you have to be proficient in it. You have to think in English...if they can't think in the language they are learning, it is a major barrier.

One participant further explained that the limitations of language can usually be identified through written and verbal exercises. This is when children are encouraged to speak and write English within different social contexts. Furthermore, the participant suggested that language barriers to learning may be a result of a lack of exposure to English language development in the home environment. This is where parents of L2 learners do not show an interest in reading to their children or engaging in conversations in the English language.

P5: I was speaking about the game reserve... and about the animals that are found at the game reserve. The one boy asked me "Can I play that game?"... There is a lot of explaining that needs to go on because of the language (differences)... but I also feel that it has got to the stage where it's not so much a language or a cultural problem... it's a social problem. So you ask why they don't speak and read properly – it's because they are not exposed to it at home.

A few participants in the current study do not regard language as a barrier to teaching and learning in their classrooms. One participant in particular, emphasised that although barriers to learning were experienced by children in her class, their learning difficulties were not related to language.

P6: Most of them have been to ex-Model C preschools. So they all came in knowing English full well. So we didn't have to start at the ground level.

P3: I would say in the past it was... but now, as they are coming through our schools, you don't really get it. I don't see it as a problem.

Another participant agreed with this view and justified it by stating that she only taught three L2 learners. She further explained that language barriers would probably have been more significant in her classroom if she had taught more L2 learners.

P2: If they enter the school from the Grade R and Grade 1 class, by the time they are in Grade 3, they speak English quite well. It's just like, that their written language will be a little, you know, difficult. But orally, they can communicate and understand.

The findings presented above address the core research question which aims to investigate language as a barrier to learning. More specifically the results show that language is not considered as a barrier to learning from the perspective of being a L2 educator. However in relation to the L2 learners, the educators had mixed views. Some participants considered language as a significant barrier to learning amongst L2 learners whilst others disagreed.

4.4.2 The manifestation of language barriers in the practical learning context

Some of the participants provided insight into the identification and manifestation of language barriers to learning amongst L2 learners. More specifically they pointed out that such learning problems usually manifest through a child's written work in the form of sentence construction and the incorrect use grammar.

P2: They will speak and read their books well. But yet, when it comes to the constructing of sentences and writing sentences- they battle with it.

P6: Because of translation... (the L2 learners) think in isiZulu and then they write it....but if they want to say something to me orally, it's quite fine but they will still make the mistake of 'he and she' and gender and things like that.

Most of the educators agreed on the above-mentioned points and further highlighted that the L2 children's reading level and ability to speak English was often much higher than their written ability.

The above section addresses the research questions which aim to firstly investigate how language is considered a barrier to learning amongst L2 learners in ex-Model C schools and secondly to identify these particular challenges. Furthermore the section also looked at the research question which investigated the difference in participation

amongst L2 learners in the learning process as compared to their English-speaking peers.

4.5 Teaching Methods and Assessment amongst second-language learners in English Medium Schools

The fourth theme that emerged from the data related to the teaching methods and assessment used amongst L2 learners in English medium schools. Two sub-themes emanated from this theme which included the effective teaching methodologies for L2 learners and the assessment of L2 learners. These sub-themes are presented individually below:

4.5.1 Effective teaching methodologies for second-language learners

Most of the participants felt that the L2 learners learnt far more effectively when engaging in practical activities. Despite most of the participants teaching at the Grade 3 level (which requires less concrete and more abstract thinking from learners), the participants explained that by using more interactive methods of teaching the L2 learners would understand and grasp concepts more efficiently as opposed to the traditional chalk and talk method.

P4: It really depends on the subject. But we do, do role plays, discussions, group work. I also have my interactive board as well to help them. I have small groups for different things like where they will come to the carpet and play a game or use flard cards for Maths. I also have a reading group, where we use words that they don't know which they read out and try make sentences with the words.

P2: We use lots of hands-on, practical activities and we also have an interactive board. We use lots of concrete aids like counters, you know... actual things.

P5: Yes... I think the pictures because then they can see. If you are talking about something they have never seen...then how are they really gonna understand what you talking about? Other times it's just discussion and pictures... posters and things like that.

One participant felt that the development of comprehension skills was vital for L2 learners who have difficulty with English, as so many of them struggle with this particular aspect of language.

P1: It's about developing new vocabulary that can be used in a child centred context, which they can relate to...So that when they read something they are able to understand.

The participant quoted above further suggested that a variety of teaching methods can be helpful in the initial stages of learning, before a child is expected to formalize their understanding of the concept with written work activities.

P1: We use a computer based methodology, aural work, class discussions. It's definitely more effective when the child can actually read, speak, see and hear the language.

These views were shared by another participant who felt that a concept should be covered for a few weeks before moving onto the next.

P6: I think that teaching a concept thoroughly and going over it for a couple weeks... that works best for second-language learners especially in the Junior Primary.

The results above explain the perceptions and experiences of educators when it comes to the effective teaching methods amongst linguistically diverse learners in the Foundation Phase of ex-Model C schools, which was considered a main research question in this study.

4.5.2 Assessment of second-language learners

The current study showed the complexity of assessment when it comes to L2 learners in ex-Model C schools. In direct line with the CAPS document and other government policies, the participants explained that at English medium schools, from Grade 3, all learners regardless of their mother tongue are assessed in the LoLT of the school.

Many of the participants suggested that formal assessment amongst L2 learners can perhaps be compromised, when compared to their English-speaking peers. This was a result of using standardised tests to assess both English-speaking and L2 learners regardless of their mother tongue.

P1: I don't think there is much variety of assessment to separate first and second-language speakers...The same written work would be expected of both groups of learners. So perhaps the second-language learners are a bit disadvantaged.

P2: At our school English is regarded as a home language and it is taught as English home language, not first additional language. And now when we assess, we assess according to English home language... Yes, that's the sad part. Even though we know it's their second language, the LoLT of the school is English home language and so we have to test according to that.

One of the participants further argued that:

P5: They have to be proficient in the language they are being taught and assessed in and they are often not.

Many of the participants believe that L2 children are compromised when it comes to assessment at an English medium school as they generally received lower marks when compared to their English peers. However as educators they had to remain objective when assessing children and avoid bias when it came to language competency

P2: They don't fair too well because they are being assessed as if they are home language English speakers when they are not.

P4: They usually receive a lower mark when being assessed because it's not their first language or they not familiar with certain words... So they are actually compromised.

P1: You might know from having spoken with the L2 child and gone through an exercise with them- that they really do understand that concept. But in a test situation, they not showing that they can because of their language barrier to

reading that question. They battle to read the question and put the answer down on paper- you know actual written work.

One of the participants, who is quoted above, expressed her concern for the lack of competency amongst L2 learners who do not fare well in formal assessments, year after year. According to the national Department of Education, a learner can only repeat once in a particular phase.

P4: It is pointless teaching and assessing them in the language, but they don't understand. A child in my class has repeated in the phase before...so he is not allowed to repeat in the same phase again despite him failing his tests. So I have to push him through but I can see he is not ready to go to Grade 4.

On the other hand another participant felt that the ELP amongst her 2014 class did not compromise the performance of L2 learners when it came to assessment.

P6: We also have government tests now. We have the ANA tests... Our school did Maths and English last term. And we averaged on a 70%- well that was my class. We got 70% for English and 65% for Maths My highest, which was a black child... was 96% for English and 90% for Maths

These results address the research question which aims to find the effects that language diversity has on assessment techniques in the selected ex-Model C classrooms in Pietermaritzburg.

4.6 The English Language Competency amongst second-language learners in ex-Model C schools

The fifth theme that emerged from the data highlighted the English language competency amongst L2 learners in ex-Model C schools. Four sub-themes emanated from this major theme which includes the development of English language proficiency in the Foundation Phase, language competency of L2 learners as compared to their English-speaking peers, verbal versus written English competency amongst L2 learners and lastly the use of code-switching in ex-Model C schools.

4.6.1 Development of English language proficiency in the Foundation Phase

A participant reported a limited ELP amongst the L2 learners despite most of them starting to learn English in or prior to Grade R. She believed that the pre-school years were not setting an adequate linguistic foundation, when came to grasping the basics of the English language. The participant also proposed that the education department is possibly linguistically overloading Foundation Phase learners:

P5: Now, the department want us to teach isiZulu, Afrikaans and English from Grade 1. The children aren't yet proficient in their own home language, let alone two other languages... It completely confuses them.

Other participants had different views:

P2: If they start and develop from that time, then like... we don't have a problem. Should a child, say for example enter in Grade 3 then they battle. They take some time in order to fit in and then we see the language barrier there.

P6: Most of them have been to ex-Model C preschools. So they all came in knowing English- full well. So we didn't have to start at the ground level...we don't have a problem with them knowing or understanding English.

The results above suggest that the development of English language proficiency amongst L2 learners can contribute to their competency in the language. This finding addresses the research question which aims to investigate language barriers to learning and the effects that language diversity has amongst L2 learners within an English medium school.

4.6.2 Language competency of second-language learners as compared to their English-speaking peers

The participants were asked to compare the language competency between L2 learners and their English-speaking peers. The study found an existing difference in language competency between the two language groups. More specifically the majority of the participants explained that only some L2 learners had a lower proficiency in English and this was generally related to their academic ability. One participant also pointed out

that the foreign national learners were not as proficient in English as the others in the class.

P1: Five or six years ago there was far more of a difference. Whereas now, whether a child speaks English as a second language or as their home language, the proficiency between them is more or less the same. Whereas previously there was a huge discrepancy between the proficiency of home language English speakers as opposed to the L2 learners.

P3: It is not a general thing that all L2 learners' battle with English... some of them achieve very well. But when it comes to comparing the L2 learners to the English-speaking learners, the English speakers do rate a bit higher. Just purely because, I don't know, it just seems to come more naturally to them and it's their mother tongue. But intellectually the L2 learners can achieve equally well.

P6: The foreign national learners are not as proficient in English as the other L2 learners in the class.

One of the research questions in this study intended to discover any differences between the English-speaking and L2 learners in ex-Model C schools. Therefore the findings to this question are presented above.

4.6.3 Verbal versus written English competency amongst second-language learners

The participants were also asked to compare the L2 learners' verbal and written competency in English. The majority of the participants felt that most L2 learners had a stronger ability in speaking the language than writing it.

P1: They are able to follow a verbal instruction; probably even up to a four or five step at a Foundation Phase level.... They can follow that a lot more easily than as opposed to a two or three step written instruction. Using the same words, sometimes. As soon as it's in writing, they feel a bit more hesitant. So they are more comfortable with being given a verbal instruction and being able to answer in a verbal context as opposed to written.

P4: When we talk and have class discussions- they know the work. I'll ask them a question, they will pick up their hands and speak the language and know the work. But when it comes to putting things on paper, they have spelling mistakes, they twist the words around, they use them in the wrong context because they don't understand, either how to spell it or whatever the case is.

P5: They definitely are able speak more confidently and competently than they can write. The majority of them cannot express themselves well in written form. They are poor in their writing which includes the incorrect use of language, spelling and grammar. Their spelling is appalling because they don't know the phonetics of English yet they have been taught for three years in English.

One participant suggested that the lower written competency amongst L2 learners was perhaps related to a dependence on their home language to decode meanings and create understanding before answering in English.

P6: When they write it, they think it in Zulu and then they translate it. So their spoken and written English would be, I wouldn't say wrong, but it's not going to make sense sometimes

Another participant pointed out that the disparity between the L2 learners written versus spoken ELP, usually emerged amongst the weaker learners in her class especially when it came to learning Phonics, Spelling and Comprehension. She further argued that the ELP of a L2 learner would be according to their personal academic ability.

P3: It's probably the same... their spoken and written work. You see these ones who are strong, are strong in their written work as well. The weaker ones, their language is weak and their written work is weak.

The above findings explain the difference in verbal and written English competency amongst L2 learners. More specifically the study found that most L2 learners had a stronger ability in speaking English rather than writing the language. These results

speak to the research question which intended to investigate the difference in participation amongst L2 learners in the learning process as compared to their English-speaking peers.

4.6.4 The use of code-switching in ex-Model C schools

One participant stated that she had nineteen L2 learners in her class, of which many shared common languages with her i.e. isiZulu and Sesotho. She explained that she used this linguistic commonality in her teaching, by code-switching between English and the child's respective home-language as a technique to assist learning.

P4: I can teach something in English, and then while the others are working, I can call a specific child, who I know doesn't understand and then work with them. I will explain it in Zulu if they are Zulu. We talk about it in their language until they understand what each word means, I try help them recognise the meaning of things then they try it on their own....(I) feel that code-switching is helpful for these kids especially for the ones who struggle.

Another participant completely disagreed with the code-switching technique when teaching in an English medium school.

P5: At some stage, you got to speak the language, and be spoken to in the language, think in the language and only speak the language. Otherwise you will just keep reverting to your own home language (and not develop your competency).

Code-switching was found to be a contentious topic within the multicultural classroom where some participants found it to be an effective coping strategy whilst others disagreed with the reliance on a first language.

The above section illustrates and addresses the research question that investigates the effect language diversity has on teaching methods through the use of code-switching and the management of such issues surrounding linguistic diversity within the classroom.

4.7 Current learner support strategies implemented at ex-Model C schools in Pietermaritzburg to alleviate language barriers to learning

The final theme that emerged from the data identified the current learner support strategies implemented at ex-Model C schools in Pietermaritzburg in order to alleviate the language barriers to learning. Under this theme, nine sub-themes emanated, which are: resources available at ex-Model C schools, private tuition, individual tutoring by class teacher, peer supervision and weekly grade meetings, volunteer programmes at ex-Model C schools, continuous professional development of foundation phase educators, remedial intervention, speech-language therapy and language enrichment programmes. These sub-themes are presented individually below.

4.7.1 Resources available at ex-Model C schools

The study found that most ex-Model C schools have remained privileged and are rarely short of basic resources and facilities. Some participants suggested that the availability of these resources ensured the optimal learning and development amongst the learners at these particular schools. These views were echoed by other participants who further highlighted the various learner support facilities available to those learners who experience barriers to learning.

P4: I'm very grateful because teachers at other schools have to deal with children and their problems plus have no photocopying machine, they don't have the books they need to use. I'm very happy to be at this school because there is the support from all the staff members and the material resources.

P6: Our school is very privileged... because we could always order our workbooks. Work material is never a shortage for us. We are very well resourced... extremely well. We are never short of things to do and our teacher resource room is full. And we also have access to the photocopying machine.

P3: We have the remedial class and the additional remedial teachers who do individual sessions. We also have the Occupational Therapist and Counsellor.

4.7.2 Private tuition

Most of the educators indicated that a primary source of learner support for children with language barriers to learning included private tuition after school hours. The participants further explained that many children experiencing learning difficulties were referred to private English lessons usually held on the school premises by private consultancies.

P4: From Grade 3 onwards, the school itself cannot offer further support so the children are advised to go for additional lessons with a private tutor that are held on the school premises. Sometimes they do English or Maths or both. So that's where they are expected to get extra help once they are in Grade 3.

P5: Grade 3 learners who still need extra academic help, must attend private tuition as we cannot accommodate the entire Junior Primary in our extra lessons...there are just too many of them. So we have a private company based at our school to assist the children who need it.

One participant raised concern surrounding the growing need for English tuition amongst Foundation Phase learners and the financial implications of the additional lessons amongst parents.

P6: So there are a few children who have learning problems that go for English...they usually have language problems. Then we recommend that those children go to a private tuition, even if they have a Maths problem we usually encourage them to start off with English. So that's what we have in our school as a remedial aid. But it's not free; the parents pay for it separately and it can be quite expensive.

4.7.3 Individual tutoring by class teacher

Each participant provided an account of the intervention strategies used within their classrooms to assist children with learning difficulties. The participants were given a scenario where they had to provide an intervention in order to assist an isiZulu-speaking child within their class that could not understand a Maths concept despite

explaining the problem several times. The majority of the participants reported that they would focus on working with the child individually by explaining the concept again.

P1: I would certainly go back a couple of steps. So if they not able to have any abstract thinking you must go back to concrete. And see if they have grasped that concept, using concrete aids. You know, even if it's just counting on fingers...using beads or sticks, beans or you know whatever they need. Even into a pictorial level and see by going through those stages of development again, (and decipher if they are able to understand).

P6: So then I will have to go down to basics. So if they don't understand a concept, say... we are doing problem solving. And they don't know how to reach a conclusion for the problem, what I ask them to do. I first ask them if they are able to read it. So they must read it and understand it. Then I ask them to colour in the numbers or highlight them. So basically I have to take them to my table, or my reading corner, and explain it again thoroughly.

The participant quoted above further specified:

P6: Okay, the first thing, if they don't understand it, in my class... it won't be a language problem- it will be a learning problem.

4.7.4 Peer-supervision and weekly grade meetings

Some of the participants reported that the assistance of colleagues in the form of peer supervision and regular staff meetings proved effective when dealing with learners who have language barriers to learning.

P4: If the child doesn't understand and I have tried every single method. I can take my concerns to the weekly grade meeting, where we discuss the problems we are having with the child and explain the methods we have tried. Our colleagues will help by suggesting other methods and then you can try different ways of dealing with it.

P6: I ask my colleagues to assist me when I have difficulty in getting a child to understand a particular concept. Maybe my teaching method is not what the child understands. Because if I have done it over and over again and the child still doesn't understand, then it's something in my teaching method or something that they don't understand.

4.7.5 Volunteer programmes at ex-Model C schools

A few participants highlighted their school learner support initiative whereby members of the community volunteer to assist children who are struggling in the class.

P4: We also have people who come in as volunteers and they help. If a child is struggling in the class...you can ask them to work with him or her individually doing different work activities to assist them academically.

P5: We have many professionals assisting us at school like the remedial teachers, occupational therapists and speech therapists however there are still just too many children who need help...so volunteers occasionally come in to assist us with reading... just to give the children some individual help.

4.7.6 Continuous professional development of foundation phase educators

Most of the participants felt that their schools provided them with the opportunity to keep updated on the latest education trends and methods of teaching by encouraging them to attend various training and workshops.

P4: We do have staff development, every term, in the first week of the term. It deals with things like how to manage your class, how to deal with a grieving child, reading workshops, we also went to a CAPS one.

P3: But the schools have been very good with, you know... keeping us up-to-date on new methods. We go for training and workshops regularly where we are exposed to new trends. We are moving away from chalk and talk methods and focusing on developing thinking skills and creativity...

This understanding of contemporary education was shared by other participants. However one of the participants stressed the importance of government-based workshops remaining relevant and informative.

P5: I think I have been for every workshop that was ever available. Most of them were very informative and reassuring that you are on the right track and that sort of thing. And that you know what you are doing... and give you some ideas to implement in the classroom. They were very constructive and you get something out of it. But there is a lot of in-service training nowadays by the Department that is a total waste of time for teachers who have been teaching for a number of years.

4.7.7 Remedial intervention

This study identified remedial intervention as being a crucial aspect of learner support being implemented at ex-Model C schools in Pietermaritzburg in order to alleviate the language barriers to learning.

4.7.7.1 Weekly remedial assistance

Many of the participants expressed the important role that the remedial teachers fulfil at their respective schools. The educators explained that the children who were identified as having learning difficulties related to language were often referred for remedial learner support as a first point of intervention.

P2: We initially try to assist the child as the class teacher by working with them individually. We try to explain concepts again and if that doesn't help and we identify a learning problem... then we refer the child to remedial teacher. Thereafter the remedial teacher takes the child, out of the class for about half an hour a day and she intervenes.

P3: We have children who go to the remedial teacher once a week. She usually goes through the phonics and the spelling of the week and a bit of reading with the child during the session.

Other participants echoed these views on the role of remedial teachers at their schools however they raised concern surrounding the overload and unavailability of remedial assistance for all learners despite them requiring the help.

P4: The remedial teacher only works till 12:30 so she can only see those two and the rest go for private lessons. Everyone is overloaded with children and they can't fit them in to one day...by the time they are in Grade 3, none of them will get help because she is busy with the pre-primary, Grade 1 and 2.

On the other hand, another participant argued that all learning difficulties were dealt with by the class teachers as there are no remedial teachers based at her school.

P6: There are no remedial teachers based at our school but we work with the children individually or refer them for private lessons after school

4.7.7.2 Full-time remedial classes

Some of the participants explained their schools initiative at implementing the inclusive education approach. One of the participants explained:

P3: Our school does have structures in place and I must say that we have- well each grade has a remedial unit. So, we have three Grade 2 classes and then one smaller class. Currently there are about eleven learners in that class. So what we do, when they are in Grade 1, they get identified and they go to the remedial class, so it's smaller... one on one.

P5: It is a mixed remedial class from Grade 4-7. You know they are not special needs learners. They are just slower learners that need extra time and more individual attention.

4.7.8 Speech-Language Therapy

One of the participants mentioned the inclusion of a Speech Therapist at her school. Other participants did not feel the need to engage the services of a speech therapist at their school; nor refer a child who may be experiencing language barriers to learning to a Speech Therapist.

P3: We have a speech therapist that comes every day and the boys go out for their sessions to see her

P2: We will consult speech therapists only if there is something- like if they are stuttering or they don't pronounce their words properly.

This view was supported by another participant who suggested that:

P1: There's are not many learners that we have here, that have a physical inability to say the English words so it wouldn't be that kind of therapy. But if it was for vocabulary development and language development from the speech therapist then yes- they would.

4.7.9 Language Enrichment Programme

The Language Enrichment Programme is an integral learner support strategy for the L2 learners at two of the participants' school.

P5: In Grade 1 and 2 they have four days a week with an hour of Language Enrichment which is a programme set by a teacher that they can attend. So they usually can only accommodate each child once a week because there are so many who need it...and then they want a group of ten or twelve children. So just to accommodate all Grade 1s and 2s... they end up going once a week to Language Enrichment.

P4: So extra English lessons in the form of Language Enrichment classes is offered for Grade 1 and 2 learners if they are experiencing some kind of difficulty when it comes to language.

This study aimed to identify the current measures implemented by local schools to address any challenges related to language. All the sections above clearly define and explain the interventions currently being implemented by ex-Model C schools in Pietermaritzburg to address any language challenges faced by L2 learners.

4.8 Conclusion

This chapter has presented the findings of the study which emerged during the thematic analysis process. The results indicate that there have been developments in the ex-Model C schooling context since 1994. More specifically this includes the increase of non-White and foreign national learners in ex-Model C schools in Pietermaritzburg, which has led to the emergence of a multicultural classroom context, in which the participants of this study felt inadequately trained.

The results also showed an increasing number of L2 learners within Pietermaritzburg ex-Model C Foundation Phase classrooms, with the majority of these learners being isiZulu speakers. Furthermore the findings of the study illustrated the local demographics of Foundation Phase educators which were typically identified as being older white females who had minimal language competency in national languages either than English.

Some of the participants regarded language as a barrier to learning whilst others disagreed. This inference was largely based on each participant's own experiences within their respective schools and the academic ability of the learners. Language barriers were most easily identified and usually manifested in the learners' written work which perhaps compromised their performance in formal assessment tasks. Finally this chapter presented the various learner support strategies implemented at ex-Model C schools in Pietermaritzburg to alleviate language barriers to learning.

The following chapter will present the results of this study in relation to the existing literature presented in Chapter 2.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter will discuss the findings of the study in relation to the research questions and existing literature as presented in previous chapters. The themes discussed in this chapter represent selected Foundation Phase educators' perceptions of the challenges facing L2 learners in ex-Model C schools in Pietermaritzburg.

The themes that emerged from the data include the development of local ex-Model C schools post-apartheid; multiculturalism including linguistic diversity in English medium schools; language as a barrier to teaching and learning; English language competency amongst L2 learners in ex-Model C schools, teaching methods and assessment amongst L2 learners in English medium schools and lastly the current learner support strategies implemented at ex-Model C schools in Pietermaritzburg to alleviate language barriers to learning.

The following sections within this chapter will further explore the research findings within their respective themes and discuss them in relation to the study's research questions as well as the literature presented in Chapter 2.

5.2 The development of ex-Model C Primary Schools in Pietermaritzburg

This section will discuss the first theme of this study which focused on the development of ex-Model C primary schools in Pietermaritzburg since 1994. Under this theme, five sub-themes were identified. This included the racial transformation of ex-Model C schools, the demographics of Foundation Phase learners in ex-Model C schools, the prevalence of L2 learners in the Foundation Phase at ex-Model C schools, the demographics of Foundation Phase educators at ex-Model C schools and the language competency of educators at ex-Model C schools. These sub-themes are presented individually below and are discussed in relation to the existing literature.

5.2.1 The racial transformation

This study identified a progressive racial transformation in Pietermaritzburg ex-Model C schools since the abolishment of apartheid laws. More specifically, the research

participants emphasised that there was an increased enrolment of Black African learners in ex-Model C schools as opposed to their White, Coloured and Indian peers. These results are consistent with the existing literature which suggests a distinct movement of non-White learners into former Whites-only schools (Carrim, 2013; Jansen & Blank, 2014; Navsaria et al., 2011).

This finding addresses one of the key research questions by highlighting the need for ex-Model C schools in Pietermaritzburg to embrace a multicultural model of education, where such an approach may assist L2 learners in improving their level of academic achievement. Furthermore due to the increasing number of non-White learners identified in ex-Model C schools, this study also highlighted a subsequent need to adequately accommodate for the educational requirements of racially, culturally and linguistically diverse learners (Carrim, 2013; Jansen & Blank, 2014; Navsaria et al., 2011).

These views are in accordance with the inclusive education approach which advocates that all South African schools should be responsive to the educational needs of each learner. The current study highlighted the need for more ex-Model C schools to include appropriate language-based learner support as a result of the increasing number of L2 learners and the possibility that they may experience language barriers to learning (Donald et al., 2014; Lazarus et al., 2007; Nkomo et al., 2004; Walton et al., 2015).

5.2.2 The demographics of foundation phase learners in ex-Model C schools

The present study found that the age of a Foundation Phase learner ranged from 7-10 years old. The average class size ranged from 21-29 learners (with an equal difference between girls and boys) and a racial majority of non-White learners (i.e. either Black-African or Indian). These results are consistent with existing literature which indicates that the learner population of ex-Model C schools is reflective of the multi-cultural context of South Africa (Carrim, 2013; Navsaria et al., 2011; Pluddemann, 1999; Probyn, 2006; Soudien, 2010).

As discussed in the previous section, this study confirmed an increase of non-White learners in ex-Model C schools. This may be attributed to the increased socio-economic status amongst previously marginalised groups, as suggested by Soudien (2010). The

participants further explained that the increasing number of Black African learners at ex-Model C schools may also link to their parents preference for English medium schools, which they believe would be of greater benefit to their children. These findings are consistent with the views of Pluddemann (1999) as well as Brock-Utne and Holmarsdottir (2004) who asserted that parents of L2 learners consider English as an essential aspect of their children's education and future occupational opportunities.

These findings emphasise the importance of multiculturalism in the current education practices which is largely due to the progressive racial, cultural and linguistic transformation, as identified in Pietermaritzburg schools (Carrim, 2013; Navsaria et al., 2011; Pluddemann, 1999; Probyn, 2006; Soudien, 2010). Furthermore the findings also highlight the current study's research problem, which indicates a need to address linguistic diversity within schools in an appropriate manner. This study proposes that this could be achieved through the further development of current education policies and the implementation of adequate learner support strategies within South African schools (Donald et al., 2014; Lazarus et al., 2007; Nkomo et al., 2004; Walton et al., 2015).

5.2.3 Prevalence of second-language learners in the foundation phase at ex-Model C schools

This study highlighted the increased prevalence of L2 learners in the Foundation Phase of former Model-C schools in Pietermaritzburg since 1994. More specifically it identified that most of the L2 learners were isiZulu HL speakers, with only a few being Afrikaans, Sesotho and isiXhosa mother tongue speakers. These findings are consistent with the research conducted by Broom (2004). The author identified significant alterations in terms of the race and language composition of classes within primary schools in South Africa (Broom, 2004). Likewise, the current research findings reiterated the results of Stats SA (2011) which stated that within the context of KwaZulu-Natal, approximately 80% of the population are isiZulu mother tongue speakers.

The present study discovered an increase in foreign national learners who attend former Model-C schools in the Pietermaritzburg area. These learners originate from countries such as Sudan, Nigeria and Zimbabwe. This particular research finding highlights the

need for ex-Model C schools in Pietermaritzburg to now accommodate for the increasing number of foreign national learners. More specifically it addresses one of the main research objectives which emphasises the need for the education system and policies to further account for the cultural and linguistic diversity of foreign national learners in South African schools (Lazarus et al., 2007; Ntombela & Mhlongo, 2010; Pluddemann, 1999; Royds & Dale-Jones, 2012; Walton et al., 2015; Wright, 2012).

5.2.4 The demographics of foundation phase educators at ex-Model C schools

This study identified limited diversity in the demographics of educators within the Foundation Phase of the selected ex-Model C schools in Pietermaritzburg. This included aspects of race, age and gender. More specifically, the study results suggested that Foundation Phase educators were predominantly older and more professionally experienced White females. This finding was supported by previous studies conducted in South Africa which identified a lack of racial, cultural and linguistic diversity amongst educators at ex-Model C schools in other provinces (Monyai, 2010; Navsaria et al., 2011).

The above finding addresses two of the core research questions, with the first being an investigation into the challenges of multiculturalism. The finding demonstrates a lack of diversity amongst Foundation Phase educators which is not in keeping with the multicultural transformation of the learner body in ex-Model C schools. This cultural difference perhaps contributes to the difficulties experienced by L2 learners in a schooling context that was previously driven by Western ideology.

Secondly, the finding addresses the next research question which aimed to identify the manner in which language barriers to learning occurred within the ex-Model C schooling context. More specifically it emphasised that the limited diversity amongst Foundation Phase educators perhaps contributed to language barriers to learning particularly when an educator lacked racial, cultural and linguistic diversity (Monyai, 2010; Navsaria et al., 2011).

5.2.5 Language competency of educators at ex-Model C schools

The current study identified marginal proficiency in African languages amongst Foundation Phase educators in the selected former Model C schools. This coincides

with the views of O'Connor and Geiger (2009) who argued that in order for multilingual teaching to be successful in South Africa, educators require training in various national languages. Likewise Pluddemann (2000, as cited in Navsaria et al. 2011) pointed out the scarcity of African-language speaking educators in ex-Model C schools which has led to challenges in communication amongst educators and L2 learners. Furthermore the differences in language competency amongst Foundation Phase educators and learners, perhaps contributes to language barriers to learning and teaching in ex-Model C schools (Brock-Utne & Holmarsdottir, 2004; Monyai, 2010).

The above finding therefore illustrates the racial transformation that can be seen amongst learners of ex-Model C schools. However it appears as though the staff demographics of these particular schools have not changed, by demonstrating limited racial and gender diversity. This corroborates the differences in educator and learner demographics, specifically in relation to language which may be contributing to the barriers to learning and teaching experienced by L2 learners in ex-Model C schools (Carrim, 2013; Navsaria et al., 2011; Pluddemann, 1999; Probyn, 2006; Soudien, 2010).

This finding highlights two essential points and addresses some of the core research questions. Firstly, it has been identified that there is a need for Foundation Phase educators to develop their language competency in the other national languages especially if they teach in multicultural ex-Model C schools. Furthermore it suggests that a limited language proficiency amongst educators may contribute to the barriers to learning amongst L2 learners (Monyai, 2010; Navsaria et al., 2011; Ntombela & Mhlongo, 2010).

Secondly the finding identifies the need for African-language educators to be included in ex-Model C schools. This may positively contribute to the communication between the increasing number of L2 learners and the educators, where multilingualism can be used as a resource to overcome language barriers to learning (Carrim, 2013; Navsaria et al., 2011; Owen-Smith, 2010; Pluddemann, 1999; Probyn, 2006; Soudien, 2010; Wright, 2012).

The above research finding also addresses the research objective which aimed to identify ways that L2 learners can be assisted in the learning process to reach their optimal level of academic performance.

The following section will now discuss the second theme that was found during the analysis process in relation to the existing literature and research questions.

5.3 Multiculturalism including linguistic diversity in English medium schools

The second theme that was identified in the data was multiculturalism including linguistic diversity in English medium schools. Under this theme three sub-themes emerged which included the following: the management of diversity in the multicultural classroom, the value of teaching learners in English and the school rules regarding use of another HL at English medium schools. These sub-themes will be discussed below:

5.3.1 The management of diversity in the multicultural classroom

The present study identified that amongst educators in Pietermaritzburg ex-Model C schools there was a lack of adequate professional training that would effectively equip them to manage the diversity of a multicultural classroom. Furthermore it was found that a large number of Foundation Phase educators currently employed in such schools were trained during the apartheid era, thus ill-equipping them to deal with the expectations of a contemporary multicultural classroom.

These findings were congruent with the existing literature which states that the lack of adequate training amongst South African educators appears to be impacting on the government's attempt to create democratically sound and inclusive schools (Bornman & Donohue, 2013; Probyn, 2006; Spaul, 2013). Furthermore it has been suggested that within the context of multicultural education, educators must be exposed to ongoing professional development opportunities with a focus on language and cultural diversity (O'Connor & Geiger, 2009; Pluddemann, 1999). More specifically Nkomo et al. (2004) pointed out that schools are responsible for ensuring that educators are adequately equipped to promote a democratic school environment that addresses the needs of all learners.

This study addresses the research problem by suggesting that South African education policies must ensure that all educators are well-equipped with the skills and knowledge to effectively manage diversity in the ex-Model C classroom, including language. This can be achieved through an emphasis on continued in-service training, in the form of workshops, seminars and conferences that can be arranged by the schools and related educational specialists (Bornman & Donohue, 2013; Nkomo et al., 2004; Pluddemann, 1999; Scarinci et al., 2015). Furthermore this study also emphasises the importance of an educator's willingness to adapt to the multicultural context of South Africa by embracing inclusivity in order for their teaching to be relative and effective.

5.3.2 The value of teaching second-language learners in English

The findings of this study suggested that teaching L2 learners at English medium schools provided them with the opportunity to expand their knowledge and vocabulary in the language. Furthermore the results showed that parents of L2 learners preferred enrolling their children at ex-Model C schools, where they were more likely to become proficient in English. These views coincide with the existing literature which highlights the value that parents of L2 learners place on English and their expectations surrounding their child's fluency in the language (Brock-Utne & Holmarsdottir, 2004; Ntombela & Mhlongo, 2010; Painter & Baldwin, 2004; Pourdavood et al., 2004; Soudien, 2010; Wright, 2012).

The results of this study further indicate that although many L2 learners benefit from their exposure to English at ex-Model C schools, a large majority of them have difficulty with the acquisition of the language and therefore require additional learning support. These views are congruent with that of Ntuli (1998) who identified the need for ex-Model C schools to provide adequate support for children who are learning in a language either than their mother tongue (Moonsamy & Kathard, 2015; Ntuli, 1998).

The above finding suggests that as a result of the increasing number of L2 learners in ex-Model C schools as well as the promotion of inclusivity and multiculturalism; schools must accommodate for the educational needs of L2 learners who require further support (Broom 2004; Moonsamy & Kathard, 2015; Ntuli, 1998). More specifically the finding addresses the research questions which sought to investigate any difficulties

that a L2 learner may experience and the support structures they may require within the context of an ex-Model C school.

5.3.3 The school rules regarding the use of another Home language at English medium schools

The present research found that Pietermaritzburg schools had different rules regarding the use of HL amongst L2 learners in English medium schools. More specifically the study found that some ex-Model C schools maintained an open language policy whilst others had implemented a strict English-only policy during school hours. These results coincide with work by Painter and Baldwin (2004) and Probyn (2006) and who stated that according to the LiEP of 1997, each school is responsible for the use of language within their own educational context.

This finding suggests that the influence of language diversity and/or language barriers to learning may differ within each ex-Model C school, as a result of the varying school rules within their specific context. Furthermore in relation to the research question, this finding highlights that a policy such the LiEP of 1997 may serve as a contextual barrier to learning where L2 learners are not given a definite structure in which they can develop their ELP (Ntombela & Mhlongo, 2010; Owen-Smith, 2010; Paradis et al., 2009).

The next section will discuss the third theme that was identified in this research with reference to theory, policy and empirical literature.

5.4 Language as a barrier to learning and teaching

This section discusses the third major theme that emerged from the data, language as a barrier to teaching and learning. Within this theme two sub-themes emanated, which included language as a barrier to learning for L2 educators and learners in ex-Model C schools and secondly, the manifestation of language barriers in the practical learning context.

5.4.1 Language as a barrier for second-language educators and learners in ex-Model C schools

According to the findings of this study, the educators who were multilingual reported no significant language barriers to teaching at English medium schools. These educators emphasised that a broader linguistic ability, specifically in the African languages proved beneficial in teaching L2 learners. These ideas coincide with Pluddemann (2000, as cited in Navsaria et al., 2011) who identified the need for appropriately qualified African-language speaking educators in ex-Model C schools in order to reduce the communication difficulties that have arisen between educators and learners. These findings suggest that educators within the context of ex-Model C schooling should be encouraged to develop their knowledge of the official national languages in order to reduce the effects of language barriers to learning in their classrooms.

The results of this study also confirm that language barriers to learning exist amongst L2 learners who attend ex-Model C schools in Pietermaritzburg. The literature has shown an increasing proportion of bi-or multilingual learners who attend ex-Model C schools whose MoI is English (Broom, 2004; Carrim, 2013; Jansen & Blank, 2014; Navsaria et al., 2011; O'Connor & Geiger, 2009). Furthermore, Broom (2004) identified an increase in the number of L2 children learning to read in a language that is not their home language and therefore increased the prevalence of language barriers to learning.

The present study also found that language barriers to learning were more prevalent amongst L2 learners who had lower academic abilities and in classrooms which had more L2 learners than English-speaking learners. This finding concurs with Paradis et al. (2009) who stated that children who are learning English as a second-language do so systematically and at varying rates, according to their ability and developmental level.

Within the context of this study these findings suggest that the academic ability of a child and their difficulties with the learning of language, are perhaps linked and should be accommodated for appropriately (Paradis et al., 2009). Moreover this finding specifically addresses the research question which aims to investigate the manner in

which language is considered a barrier to learning, by suggesting that it is linked to a child's academic ability.

5.4.2 The manifestation of language barriers in the practical learning context

This study found that language barriers to learning usually manifest, and are more easily identified, through written activities as opposed to oral tasks. In addition the findings further suggested that within the Foundation Phase, the majority of L2 learners were able to read and speak far more proficiently in English than write in the language.

These results speak to the ideas of Paradis et al. (2009) who stated that it can take L2 learners many years to “master complex academic English skills” which may include writing (p.3). Likewise Jong and Harper (2005) pointed out that L2 learners' knowledge of their home language influences all areas of writing which includes punctuation, orthography, vocabulary selection, sentence structure and other forms of text organization. Furthermore, the authors pointed out that L2 learners' difficulties with English may be interpreted as learning deficits in writing, when there is in fact a cultural and linguistic influence on writing development amongst L2 learners (Jong & Harper, 2005; Moonsamy & Kathard, 2015).

The above points address one of the core research questions of this study, by illustrating how language is conceptualised as a barrier to learning and teaching amongst educators who teach L2 learners in ex-Model C schools within the area of Pietermaritzburg. These results indicate the complexity surrounding linguistic diversity and its influence on the learning process, particularly for learners who have lower levels of scholastic achievement.

The following section will discuss the fourth theme that was established in this research in relation to the existing literature.

5.5 Teaching and Assessment amongst second-language learners in English Medium Schools

The fourth theme of this study focused on the teaching methods and assessment used amongst L2 learners in English medium schools. Two further sub-themes were identified which included the effective teaching methodologies for L2 learners and the

assessment of L2 learners. These sub-themes are presented individually below and discussed in relation to the existing literature in Chapter 2.

5.5.1 Effective teaching methodologies for second-language learners

The present study found that audio-visual tools were regarded as the most effective teaching methodology for L2 learners. The development of comprehension skills was also seen as vital for L2 learners as many children seemed to have difficulty with this particular aspect of language. In addition this study found that the reiteration of concepts was essential at the Foundation Phase level and that L2 learners should be encouraged to speak English frequently in order to increase their understanding and fluency in the language.

These findings coincide with the opinions of Probyn (2006) and McCrary et al. (2011) who explored the learning process of L2 learners and later emphasised the need for educators to consider effective teaching methods that would be conducive for them. The authors recommended the regular use of class discussions in order to develop ELP as well as the inclusion of practical examples (e.g. visual aids and interactive worksheets) that could further assist in the conceptualization of subjects (McCrary et al., 2011; Probyn, 2006). Furthermore the current study's findings also link to the ideas of Maher (2012) who identified the effectiveness of teaching literacy to groups of primary school children through interactive technology.

The results of this study have confirmed the value of using innovative teaching methodologies and can further inform the practice of Foundation Phase education amongst L2 learners in the South African context. Furthermore this finding also addresses the research question which aimed to identify the effects of linguistic diversity on teaching methods, in consideration of Vygotsky's philosophy which emphasised the use of scaffolding techniques that provide learners with tools and strategies which assist in educational processes (Lillemyr et al., 2011; Maher, 2012; Vygotsky, 1978).

5.5.2 Assessment of second-language learners

The findings of this study showed that L2 learners were compromised during assessments, when compared to their English-speaking peers. Limited ELP was

identified amongst L2 learners specifically in formal assessment tasks such as class tests where both English-speaking and L2 learners were assessed using a standard, English-based criterion. It was reported that the L2 learners had lower levels of achievement in their annual performance when compared to their English-speaking peers.

These findings were consistent with the views of Monyai (2010) who identified that the challenges faced by L2 learners often lead to academic failure. Likewise the findings confirmed the views of Paradis et al. (2009) who highlighted that the differences in ELP amongst L2 learners and their English-speaking peers were usually identified through assessment tasks.

This study addressed the research questions by identifying the effects of language diversity on teaching methods and assessment. More specifically it emphasised the need for educators to adopt innovative teaching methods that are conducive for L2 learners and therefore accommodate for their specific needs (Lazarus et al., 2007; McCrary et al., 2011; Naidoo & Muthukrishna, 2014; Oswald & de Villiers, 2013; Potterton et al., 2004; Walton et al., 2015). In addition the study challenges the current assessment techniques implemented in ex-Model C schools which perhaps disadvantage L2 learners who are being assessed in a language that is not their mother tongue.

The fifth theme of research will be discussed in the subsequent section. Moreover it will be presented in relation to the previously reviewed literature.

5.6 The English Language Competency amongst second-language learners in ex-Model C schools

The fifth theme that emerged from this study highlighted the English language competency amongst L2 learners in ex-Model C schools. There were four sub-themes that were further categorised which includes: the development of English language proficiency in the foundation phase, language competency of L2 learners as compared to their English-speaking peers, verbal versus written English competency amongst L2 learners and lastly the use of code-switching in ex-Model C schools. These findings will be discussed in light of the literature presented in previous chapters.

5.6.1 Development of English language proficiency in the Foundation Phase

The results of this study highlighted the development of ELP amongst L2 learners in the Foundation Phase. More specifically the study found that some L2 learners lacked adequate ELP whilst others had a sound competency in the language. These opinions are consistent with the literature which states that every child has a unique rate of language acquisition; and that it can take up to eight years of well-resourced learning and teaching in English for a L2 learner to acquire ELP (Ntombela & Mhlongo, 2010; Owen-Smith, 2010; Paradis et al., 2009).

This study highlighted the difficulties experienced by local Foundation Phase learners who were expected to learn up to three languages from Grade 1. According to the National LiEP of 1997 schools are expected to select their own LoLT as well as the languages to be taught as core subjects in the Foundation Phase (Pluddemann, 1999). Furthermore, all learners are required to learn at least two official languages as subjects and one of these should be the LoLT of their respective school (Probyn, 2006; Royds & Dale-Jones, 2012).

The findings of this study provides insight into the South African education system in relation to the inclusive education approach. More specifically the findings suggest that within the context of ex-Model C schooling, every L2 learner must be accomodated for within their unique rate of language acquisition when developing their ELP (Ntombela & Mhlongo, 2010; Owen-Smith, 2010; Paradis et al., 2009). Furthermore these learners are required to learn two official languages as subjects, one of which must be English.

Realistically, these curriculum-based expectations prove to be challenging as many L2 learners showed a limited of proficiency in their home language as well as the additional languages. Furthermore this finding was inconsistent with the existing literature which promotes a multilingual approach to language development in order to strengthen the proficiency in any language (Owen-Smith, 2010; Paradis et al., 2009; Royds & Dale-Jones, 2012).

This finding is linked to the research question which aimed to investigate the manner in which language can be considered a barrier to learning. More specifically it indicates that the broader context of education including language policies, as well as the

implementation or practice of it, perhaps contribute to barriers to learning amongst L2 learners in ex-Model C schools in Pietermaritzburg.

5.6.2 Language competency of second-language learners as compared to their English-speaking peers

According to Ntombela and Mhlongo (2010) the learning process may be experienced differently by L2 learners, if the LoLT is in a language other than their mother tongue. Furthermore, it can be argued that the conceptual ability and knowledge of learners is compromised when the LoLT and mother tongue of the child is not the same. Likewise Paradis et al. (2009) pointed out that it can take a L2 learner far longer to develop their ELP when compared to their English-speaking peers.

These views are congruent with the findings of the current study which revealed that the ELP of L2 learners, as well as their English-speaking peers, would be dependent on their general academic ability. Furthermore the results of this study also pointed out that the foreign national learners within selected Pietermaritzburg ex-Model C schools were less proficient in English as compared to the other L2 learners in the class.

The above findings again highlight the need for ex-Model C schools to accommodate for the needs of linguistic diversity amongst local and foreign national Foundation Phase learners. More broadly, the South African education system and current policies should also consider the cultural and linguistic diversity of foreign national learners in South African schools in future developments (Brock-Utne & Holmarsdottir, 2004; Pluddemann, 1999; Royds & Dale-Jones, 2012; Wright, 2012).

The above findings link to the research question which investigates the challenges that multiculturalism may present for a L2 child within the context of an ex-Model C schools. Moreover it highlights the need for language barriers to learning to be considered systemically where it can occur at the classroom level as well as more broadly in relation to policy.

5.6.3 Verbal versus written English competency amongst second-language learners

According to the results of this study, the verbal ELP of most L2 learners was regarded as far stronger than their written competency in the language. It was further emphasised that L2 learners perhaps depend on a process of using their home language to decode or translate meanings of English text which possibly leads to lower written competency in the language.

These findings coincide with the literature which suggests that the home language provides the basis of all language development and may result in cross-lingual influence in L2 learning (Jong & Harper, 2005). Furthermore the literature suggests that extended time is usually spent on oral activities which provide a solid foundation for English literacy, but may delay and underestimate the written competency of L2 learners especially in the early stages of language development (Jong & Harper, 2005; Ntombela & Mhlongo, 2010; Paradis et al., 2009; Probyn, 2006; Wium, 2015).

Therefore, these findings indicate that within the South African education context educators should place equal emphasis on both written and verbal English activities, specifically amongst L2 learners in order to develop their ELP at a more consistent and equal rate. Furthermore, this finding is linked to the research question which aimed to investigate the difference in participation amongst L2 learners in the learning process as compared to their English-speaking peers.

5.6.4 The use of code-switching in ex-Model C schools

The current study identified a controversy around the use of code-switching at ex-Model C schools in Pietermaritzburg. Amongst L2 educators it was found that code-switching proved to be an effective technique to assist in teaching and learning amongst L2 learners who lacked ELP. These views were supported by the literature which suggests that home languages should be used as teaching resource in multilingual classrooms in order to develop academic excellence amongst L2 learners (Brock-Utne & Holmarsdottir, 2004; Lacroix, 2008; Owen-Smith, 2010).

Furthermore, the LiEP states that school language policies which include the use of code-switching should promote additive bilingualism, which is defined as maintaining

home languages while providing access to and the effective acquisition of additional languages (Donald et al., 2010; Donald et al., 2014; Probyn, 2006).

However some English-speaking educators felt that code-switching did not coincide with the ethos of teaching in an English medium school; as all learners were expected to be proficient in both verbal and written English without depending on their home language as a translation. This argument was congruent with the ideas of Ntombela and Mhlongo (2010) who suggested that educators are essentially responsible for providing L2 learners with the adequate tools and opportunities to practice the skill of effective communication in English.

This study aimed to explore the level of participation amongst L2 learners in the learning process as compared to their English-speaking peers. The above points illustrate the various factors that contribute to the development of ELP amongst L2 learners who attend English medium schools and their perceived lower levels of ELP.

The results also highlighted the complexity surrounding the management of language development which is dependent on a L2 learner's academic ability and the expectations of the curriculum and national policies. In addition the findings illustrate the debate surrounding code-switching as a linguistic resource amongst L2 educators and learners.

This study therefore emphasises the need for Foundation Phase educators to promote rich and varied opportunities in all four aspects of language (listening, speaking, reading and writing) in meaningful and integrated ways (Heald-Taylor, 1991 as cited in Jong & Harper, 2005). By ensuring a holistic approach to English language development, L2 learners would be able to increase their competency in the language and achieve well in English Medium Schools.

The following section will discuss the last theme that was established in this study in relation to the existing literature.

5.7 Current learner support strategies implemented at ex-Model C schools in Pietermaritzburg to alleviate language barriers to learning

The final theme that emerged from the data identified the current learner support strategies implemented at ex-Model C schools in Pietermaritzburg in order to alleviate the language barriers to learning. Under this theme, nine sub-themes emanated, which are: resources available at ex-Model C schools, private tuition, individual tutoring by class teacher, peer supervision and weekly grade meetings, volunteer programmes at ex-Model C schools, continuous professional development of foundation phase educators, remedial intervention, speech therapy and language enrichment programmes. These sub-themes are presented individually below and discussed in relation to the existing literature in Chapter 2.

Furthermore, the findings below provide a series of learner support strategies that being implemented in ex-Model C schools in Pietermaritzburg and address one of the core research questions which aimed to identify such strategies.

5.7.1 Resources available at ex-Model C schools

The findings of this study suggested that former Whites-only schools have remained far more privileged since the abolishment of apartheid laws. These schools, unlike fully government-aided schools, are equipped with vast resources including appropriate learner support facilities for those experiencing barriers to learning. This array of educational support provides the opportunity for optimal learning and development amongst such learners who attend ex-Model C schools.

In light of this study, the above results emphasise that the vast resources available at ex-Model C schools provide the opportunity for L2 learners to have access to learner support that may be scarcely available at other government schools. These findings coincide with the views of Ozler and Hoogeveen (2005 as cited in Oswald & de Villiers, 2013) and Spaul (2013) who recognised the continued need for reform in South African schools, which addresses the needs of all learners and provides them with relevant and equal educational opportunities of an acceptable standard.

5.7.2 Private tuition

The current study discovered that many Pietermaritzburg ex-Model C schools recommend private tuition as a primary source of learner support for children who experience language barriers to learning. This intervention is usually recommended to Grade 3 learners who require further assistance that is beyond the capacity of the school.

This finding addressed the research question which aimed to investigate the challenges within the learning and teaching process. More specifically it investigated the complexities of language barriers to learning that cannot be directly addressed by educators during school hours (O'Connor & Geiger, 2009). Furthermore the finding emphasises that the expectations placed on educators can be rather challenging, in terms of contact time with learners and the expertise required to deal with barriers to learning. Such issues may require further learner support that is beyond the capacity of the educator and resources available at a typical ex-Model C schools (O'Connor & Geiger, 2009).

This study identified private tutoring companies as an effective support base for L2 learners who may be experiencing language barriers to learning. More specifically this relates to L2 learners who do not have onsite access to learner support at their schools or require extended tutoring as a result of overburdened educators who cannot assist learners adequately during school hours.

5.7.3 Individual tutoring by class teacher

This study found that individual in-class tutoring proved to be the most cost effective and regularly used intervention amongst educators who assist learners with language barriers to learning. More specifically participants explained that their individual sessions would usually be based on repetition; where they would revert to previous knowledge of the concept using concrete objects as aids to explain, until the child is able to practice in an abstract way without any assistance from the educator.

These strategies can be linked to the views of Vygotsky (1978) who suggested that further learning is possible through the ZPD. Vygotsky (1978) proposed that all children have a potentially higher level of understanding that they can reach, with the

assistance of more knowledgeable others. Furthermore in relation to the South African education policy this particular intervention exemplifies the principles of inclusivity which encourages the development of in-class learner support strategies that can benefit all learners and assist them in overcoming any barriers that may impede their academic potential (DoE, 2001; Donald et al., 2014; Lazarus et al., 2007; Nkomo et al., 2004; Walton et al., 2015).

Moreover the finding addresses the research question which looked at the current learner support strategies being implemented at ex-Model C schools. Additionally the finding suggests that educators themselves can serve as the primary resource for learner support, in relation to language barriers to learning.

5.7.4 Peer-supervision and weekly grade meetings

The current study identified supervision from colleagues as well as weekly grade meetings to be highly beneficial for educators who teach children with barriers to learning. The findings suggested that regular meetings allowed the teachers to develop innovative strategies to address common problems in the grade as well as provide peer support within the school context. These views coincide with the ideas of Rhodes and Beneicke (2002) who strongly advocate “the use of coaching, mentoring and peer-networking mechanisms to enhance teacher professional development and performance in schools (p. 297). This finding also links to the research question that investigated learner support strategies being implemented at ex-Model C schools in Pietermaritzburg. Moreover it highlights the importance for educators to develop their own school-based support in addressing barriers to learning.

5.7.5 Volunteer programmes at ex-Model C schools

One of the selected ex-Model C schools in Pietermaritzburg has developed a volunteer programme whereby people from the local community assist children who are struggling in various learning areas. These volunteer tutors have proven to be of great help to the L2 children who require further individual attention.

This is consistent with the views of Pluddemann (1999) who suggested that attempts should be made to extend language support within multilingual schools by encouraging members of the community to assist in classrooms on a voluntary basis. Likewise the

study by Tracey, Hornery, Seaton, Craven and Yeung (2014) confirmed that volunteer programmes proved to be effective in schools and provided learners with the opportunity to develop their reading and improve literacy levels.

The above finding addresses the research problem by suggesting that volunteers can assist those who are experiencing barriers to learning by providing a community-based support for L2 learners from a systemic level whilst promoting the ideas of inclusivity.

5.7.6 Continuous professional development of foundation phase educators

This study identified the value of educator development workshops within the Foundation Phase of education. The findings suggest that such forms of in-service training which focused on innovated teaching methods and educationally-based topics, provided educators with the opportunity to think diversely and also keep updated with the latest trends in the field. Furthermore this study identified the irrelevance of the government-based workshops and educator development initiatives offered. These findings were consistent with the literature that highlighted the value of continued professional development amongst educators (Rhodes & Beneicke, 2002).

This finding addresses the research problem by considering the needs of L2 learners and their reliance on the expertise of educators to ensure the optimal learning and teaching. Moreover this finding may be particularly beneficial in addressing the needs of the current South African educational context where there seems to be a lack of appropriate training of educators especially for the purposes of inclusive and multicultural education within ex-Model C schools (Bornman & Donohue, 2013; McCrary et al., 2011; Nkomo et al., 2004; O'Connor & Geiger, 2009; Pluddemann, 1999; Probyn, 2006; Spaull, 2013).

5.7.7 Remedial invention

This study identified remedial intervention as being a crucial aspect of learner support being implemented at ex-Model C schools in Pietermaritzburg in order to alleviate the language barriers to learning.

5.7.7.1 Weekly remedial assistance

The findings of the present study confirmed that several ex-Model C schools in Pietermaritzburg had a range of learning support available in the form of remedial assistance. This theme can be linked to the views of Ntuli (1998) who recommended that ex-Model C schools should provide adequate learning support for L2 learners who attend mainstream schools. However the study found that due to the high prevalence of language barriers to learning within the context of ex-Model C schools, not all L2 learners who experience difficulties could be accommodated for during school hours and within the school fee structure.

The above finding suggests that there are many L2 learners in ex-Model C schools who are not receiving adequate learner support as a result of the overwhelming number of children who require it. Moreover it confirms one of the major premises of the research problem which challenges the appropriateness and adequacy of learner support available for L2 learners who experience language barriers to learning.

5.7.7.2 Full-time remedial classes

This study identified a few ex Model-C schools within the context of Pietermaritzburg that have begun to implement an inclusive approach to education. Some of these schools have established remedial units within each grade, whilst others have opportunity classes that accommodate for learners with learning difficulties as opposed to severe learning impairments.

These developments are consistent with the work of Lazarus et al. (2007) who proposed that the inclusive education approach aims to identify and address the particular needs of children who experience barriers to learning. Furthermore the authors explained that children who experience such barriers to learning usually require specific learning support from schools which would therefore necessitate a more integrated inclusive site of learning and teaching (Lazarus et al., 2007).

This finding emphasises the manner in which inclusive education is implemented within the context of Pietermaritzburg. Moreover it demonstrates that despite attempts to integrate learners with barriers to learning into mainstream schooling, remedial classes are still necessary to accommodate for learners who experience learning

difficulties. This finding addresses the research problem by suggesting that specialized interventions are required for L2 learners however in some cases it is still implemented remedially as opposed to inclusively.

5.7.8 Speech-Language Therapy

The study identified inconsistent conceptions of a speech therapist's role in the context of language barriers to learning. More specifically very few ex-Model C schools in the Pietermaritzburg area valued the services of an onsite Speech-Language Therapist.

The participants pointed out that L2 learners did not have any physical difficulty in speaking English but rather difficulty in understanding the language and expressing oneself in it. The educators therefore disregarded the expertise of speech-language specialists at their school and did not feel encouraged to refer a child who may be experiencing language barriers to learning to a Speech–Language Therapist.

These ideas were inconsistent with the work of McCrary et al. (2011) and Moonsamy and Kathard (2015) who emphasised the importance of Speech-language therapy, its influence in education and its valued role in collaborating with mainstream and remedial educators to address the needs of a multicultural and inclusive classroom. In line with the inclusive education approach, this finding also encourages the use of Speech-Language Therapists in an inter-disciplinary approach regarding barriers to learning in order to optimise the language development and overall academic performance of L2 learners (Mohangi, 2015; O' Connor & Geiger, 2009).

This finding addresses the research problem which aimed to investigate some of the effective ways to address language barriers to learning in ex-Model C schools. More specifically it emphasises the need for such schools to include professionals associated with education who can assist with addressing barriers to learning.

5.7.9 Language Enrichment Programme

The present study found that the implementation of Language Enrichment Programmes (LEP) were integral in providing specific language-based educational support for L2 learners at some of the ex-Model C schools in Pietermaritzburg. These onsite language development programmes are specifically targeted at the Grade 1 and 2 learners and

were introduced after the respective schools had identified an overwhelming need for L2 learners to develop their ELP. The establishment of the LEP programmes have depended on the existing financial and human resources available within the school context. Furthermore it has proven to be a cost effective initiative as well as beneficial for L2 learners.

This finding is consistent with the existing literature which suggests that public schools in South Africa must take responsibility for developing a contextually appropriate language plan for their schools in addressing language barriers to learning (Moonsamy & Kathard, 2015; Pluddemann, 1999). Furthermore it exemplifies the principles of inclusivity which encourages educators to develop their own support strategies within schools that identify and address any barriers to learning experienced by learners in their class (Lazarus et al., 2007; Walton et al., 2015).

In addition this finding is also linked to the research question which considers the current learner support strategies in ex-Model C schools, highlighting the significance of onsite learner support that is cost-effective and has the potential to improve the ELP of L2 learners at an early stage of intervention.

5.8 Conclusion

In conclusion, the findings of this study have provided insight into educators' perceptions of the challenges facing L2 learners in the Foundation Phase of ex-Model C schools.

The study suggested that ex-Model C schools have transformed since the end of apartheid thus requiring a multicultural model of education, in order to accommodate for the needs of diverse learners including those from foreign countries. A racial, cultural and linguistic transformation was particularly noted amongst Foundation Phase learners and not educators, which may be contributing to the barriers to learning and teaching in ex-Model C schools. Furthermore, this study identified language as a barrier to learning and teaching amongst L2 learners in ex-Model C schools within the area of Pietermaritzburg. More specifically this was deemed more relevant for L2 learners who had lower levels of scholastic achievement.

The study showed that multilingualism amongst Foundation Phase educators was a resource in the ex-Model C classroom. Furthermore it found that barriers to learning were most prevalent amongst L2 learners who had lower academic performance, especially in relation to written English exercises. The effect of language diversity on teaching methods and assessment were also discussed in this study. Several strategies are currently being implemented by ex-Model C schools in Pietermaritzburg to address language barriers to learning, many of which are beyond the scope of the educators' role.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

6.1 Introduction

This chapter will begin by presenting the conclusions drawn within this study. These conclusions will be addressed in relation to the research questions as presented in the introductory chapter. Thereafter this chapter will proceed with a discussion on the limitations of the present study. Finally, it will provide a set of recommendations for future research that may address the limitations as well as the findings which emerged in this research.

6.2 Conclusions regarding the research questions

This study aimed to *explore the problems that multiculturalism may present for a L2 child within the context of an ex-Model C school, which is driven by Western ideologies*. Furthermore the study also aimed to *investigate any differences in participation amongst L2 learners in the learning process as compared to their English-speaking peers*.

The results of the study indicated the necessity for ex-Model C schools in Pietermaritzburg to accommodate for the needs of racially, culturally and linguistically diverse learners. More specifically it was found that L2 learners evidently hold a majority status in ex-Model C schools and therefore require appropriate learner support when it comes to children who experience language barriers to learning (Carrim, 2013; Navsaria et al., 2011; Pluddemann, 1999; Probyn, 2006; Soudien, 2010). Furthermore, the study found that despite the post-apartheid racial transformation amongst learners, the staff demographics have not changed, demonstrating a limited racial and gender diversity amongst Foundation Phase educators at selected ex-Model C schools in Pietermaritzburg.

This study therefore concludes that there is a need to develop a multicultural model of education. It further suggests that South African education policies should reflect on the accommodations made for the cultural and linguistic diversity of both local and foreign national learners in all South African schools (Carrim, 2013; Jansen & Blank, 2014; Navsaria et al., 2011). This includes providing appropriate learner support for children

who may have language barriers to learning, preferably at the Foundation Phase level where early intervention is deemed most beneficial (Moonsamy & Kathard, 2015). Furthermore, this study also concludes that there is a need for ongoing professional development and in-service training of all educators to ensure that they are adequately equipped to deal with the needs of a diverse learner population (Nkomo et al., 2004; O'Connor & Geiger, 2009; Pluddemann, 1999).

Secondly, this study aimed to *investigate whether language is considered a barrier to learning amongst L2 learners in ex-Model C schools and to identify these particular challenges*. According to the research findings, language was considered a barrier to learning specifically amongst those L2 learners who had lower levels of scholastic achievement. Furthermore, the study found that L2 learners seemed to have a more developed verbal ELP when compared to their written abilities. In addition it was found that language barriers to learning usually manifested and were more easily identified, through written activities. The findings of this study further suggested that within the Foundation Phase the majority of L2 learners were able to read and speak far more proficiently in English, which perhaps explains their poorer performance on written assessment tasks (Jong & Harper, 2005; Moonsamy & Kathard, 2015; Paradis et al., 2009).

This study therefore concludes that there is a need for Foundation Phase educators to promote rich learning opportunities for L2 learners in all aspects of language which includes listening, speaking, reading and writing (Jong & Harper, 2005). Furthermore this study also concluded that multilingualism amongst Foundation Phase educators can be useful resource within the linguistically diverse setting of the ex-Model C classroom.

Thirdly, the current study *investigated the perceptions and experiences of educators within ex-Model C schools in Pietermaritzburg*. More specifically it *examined the effects language diversity had on areas such as teaching methods, subject content, assessment techniques and the management of diversity within the classroom*.

The results of the study showed that using a variety of innovative teaching methods as well as the reiteration of essential concepts proved to be the most effective in the initial stages of learning particularly amongst L2 learners (McCrary et al., 2011; Probyn,

2006). Furthermore, it was found that Foundation Phase educators were responsible for developing such strategies and implementing them in the classroom in order to accommodate for the L2 learners specific needs. In addition, the study found that L2 learners generally had lower levels of achievement in their annual performance when compared to their English-speaking peers.

This study highlighted the value of and need for continuous educator development workshops and peer supervision especially for Foundation Phase educators. Moreover it concluded that such interventions could provide educators with support from colleagues and the opportunity to further develop their knowledge and skills to improve their managerial and teaching competencies within the diverse ex-Model C classroom (Nkomo et al., 2004; O'Connor & Geiger, 2009; Pluddemann, 1999). This study further concluded that there is a need to challenge the current assessment techniques implemented in ex-Model C schools, which perhaps disadvantage L2 learners who are being assessed in a language which is not their mother tongue.

Finally, this study aimed to *investigate the current measures that are being implemented by ex-Model C schools in order to address any language challenges faced by L2 learners*. The research findings suggested that many of the selected ex-Model C schools had vast resources available to them. In addition they had various existing learner support strategies that were found to be successfully implemented at selected ex-Model C schools within the Pietermaritzburg area. This included learner support services such as speech-language therapy, remedial lessons, language enrichment programmes and onsite private tutoring services. Furthermore some Foundation Phase educators were given the opportunity to attend regular professional development workshops and weekly meetings with colleagues.

This study concluded that although there is some form of learner support strategies implemented at each of the selected ex-Model C schools, the services differed between the schools; where some had far greater onsite facilities and services than others.

6.3 Limitations of the study

This study aimed to explore educators' perceptions of the challenges facing L2 learners in the Foundation Phase of ex-Model C schools in Pietermaritzburg. This section will

reflect on the methodological problems that impacted on the results of this particular research study.

The sample group used for this study proved to be the main limitation. The sample group was not a diverse representative of the population of Foundation Phase educators in Pietermaritzburg, as only a limited number of female educators from selected ex-Model C schools were interviewed. As discussed in the previous chapters, the recruitment of participants was made on the basis of availability, i.e., convenience sampling, although due to the specific nature of the study it also had elements of purposive and snowball sampling. Due to time constraints set to complete this study and the poor response of the intended sample group, the researcher had to snowball sample outside of this specific group (Durrheim, 2006; Miles & Huberman, 1994).

The researcher acknowledges that the limited sample group used in this study may have effected the transferability of the results. Moreover, the conclusions reached in this study can therefore only be transferable to Foundation Phase educators with the same or similar characteristics and experiences as those of the study's participants. As such, the implications of this research study can only be applied cautiously to broader populations of Foundation Phase educators.

6.4 Recommendations

The following section will provide a series of recommendations that have emerged as a result of the current research study.

6.4.1 Recommendations pertaining to the limitations of this study

Firstly, it is recommended that for any future research on this topic or any relevant topics, the sample size should be increased in order to increase the credibility, transferability and dependability of the results.

Secondly, most of the educators who participated in this study were employed at the ex-Model C primary schools in the Pietermaritzburg area. It would be interesting and beneficial to further investigate this research topic in other areas of KwaZulu-Natal or provinces of South Africa to determine whether educators in other educational contexts have similar experiences and perceptions regarding L2 learners.

Thirdly, it is also recommended that further studies can be conducted on educators' perceptions of the challenges facing L2 learners in the Senior Primary and High School level of education, in order to compare the findings amongst different phases of education. The contributions of such research would be beneficial in addressing issues of policy development within the current South African education system. More specifically it may provide valued evidence-based feedback on the link between the expectations of current policy and its implications in practice within South African schools.

Finally due to the limited research addressing language barriers to learning within the ex-Model C and the post-apartheid context of South African education, it is suggested that the current research topic is further investigated in the future in order to contribute to the South African literature in this field.

6.4.2 Further studies that can be conducted on this research topic

There are various possibilities for additional studies on educators' perceptions of the challenges facing Foundation Phase learners in ex-Model C schools. Firstly, it could potentially focus on extended studies that concentrate on further validation of the results from a more varied sample of different age groups, genders and cultural backgrounds. The possibility of further studies would therefore ensure that the results of the current study are more credible, transferable and dependable as it would provide the opportunity for further data collection and analysis.

Secondly, it may also be useful to consider including a focus group as an extension of this study. The focus group could be determined by inviting local Foundation Phase educators to share their experiences of teaching L2 learners in ex-Model C schools in Pietermaritzburg, which may lead to more interesting, as well as more valid and reliable results. The group would be given the chance to speak about their particular experiences, giving further perspective on the topic, which may not have emerged in the findings of the current study.

Likewise future studies also may consider an alternate research approach such as a quantitative or mixed methods study. This may further extend the results of this present

study and provide a different perspective by means of surveys or ranking questionnaires.

6.4.3 Implications for future policy development and practice

6.4.3.1 The appropriate professional training of educators in the multicultural educational context

This study proposes that the South African education system should be held responsible for ensuring both the adequate and appropriate professional training of educators for our diverse context (Bornman & Donohue, 2013; McCrary et al., 2011; Nkomo et al., 2004; O'Connor & Geiger, 2009; Pluddemann, 1999; Probyn, 2006; Spaul, 2013). Likewise, this study also emphasises the importance of an educator's willingness to adapt to the multicultural context of South African education and to ensure that their teaching is relevant and effective for their learners' specific needs (Bornman & Donohue, 2013; Nkomo et al., 2004; Pluddemann, 1999; Scarinci et al., 2015).

Within the context of ex-Model C schooling, literature has shown that educators must be adequately equipped to address issues of diversity, particularly in relation to culture and language (Nkomo et al., 2004; O'Connor & Geiger, 2009; Pluddemann, 1999). More specifically the current study proposes that the key to effectively managing any form of diversity within the ex-Model C classroom lies on the continued professional development and training of educators. The study further suggests that this can be achieved through the regular attendance of educator development workshops, seminars and conferences that can be arranged amongst the various ex-Model C schools in Pietermaritzburg (Bornman & Donohue, 2013; Nkomo et al., 2004; Pluddemann, 1999; Scarinci et al., 2015).

6.4.3.2 Implementing learner support at ex-Model C schools

The results of this study indicate that although many L2 learners benefit from their exposure to English at ex-Model C schools, a large majority of L2 children have difficulty with the acquisition of the language and therefore require additional learning support (Moonsamy & Kathard, 2015; Ntuli, 1998). Furthermore, this study found that many of the selected ex-Model C schools in Pietermaritzburg do have some form of learner support and valuable resources available to them. However it was noted in this

study that the availability of such support varied, depending on the unique services offered at a particular school.

This study highlights the importance, value and need to implement learner support services within the context of ex-Model C schooling (Mohangi, 2015; O' Connor & Geiger, 2009). This may include speech-language therapy, remedial lessons, language enrichment programmes and onsite private tutoring services that could provide L2 learners with the specialised assistance required and is beyond the capacity of Foundation Phase educators.

6.4.3.3 Inter-disciplinary team approach to education

This study recommends that the South African education system should invest in the training and employment of associated education specialists in order to develop an inter-disciplinary approach to education. Health and other professionals who are specifically trained to intervene with barriers to learning (e.g. Speech Therapists, Remedial Educators, Occupational Therapists and Educational Psychologists) should be included in the educational system as they may effectively contribute to the learner support required (Mohangi, 2015; O'Connor & Geiger, 2009). Furthermore, it is proposed that this type of collaboration amongst various affiliated professionals would be of extreme value to L2 learners, by providing the opportunity for early intervention and appropriate support that accommodates for the needs of the learners at various levels of education. This study has emphasised that the expectations placed on educators are too challenging and that they require support that is beyond their speciality and the capacity of the resources currently available at most ex-Model C schools. Therefore the implementation of inter-disciplinary teams may still prove to be of essential value in contributing to overcoming language barriers to learning (Mohangi, 2015; O'Connor & Geiger, 2009).

6.5 Concluding remarks

This study sought to investigate the educators' perceptions of the challenges facing L2 learners in the Foundation Phase of ex-Model C schools in Pietermaritzburg, through a qualitative thematic analysis of interviews with the educators. The use of a semi-structured interview gave the educators an opportunity to describe and express their personal feelings, viewpoints and experiences. Thus the qualitative approach to this

study was most appropriate as it satisfied all the research objectives that aimed to describe and understand the perceptions of the educators.

The results of the current study showed an array of challenges amongst L2 learners in the Foundation Phase of ex-Model C schools, as discussed in Chapters 4 and 5. Thus the aim of the study was achieved by identifying these particular challenges. In addition, this study found further results that describe the ex-Model C schooling system in Pietermaritzburg. Although some interesting conclusions can be made about the results of this study, a number of issues may have been overlooked. Therefore a further investigation into this research topic would have been ideal to confirm and validate these findings.

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Appendix 1: Ethical Clearance Letter



03 April 2014

Ms Mayure Padayachee (208517290)
School of Applied Human Sciences - Psychology
Pietermaritzburg Campus

Protocol reference number: HSS/0723/013M

Project title: Exploring educators' perceptions of the challenges facing second-language learners within the Foundation Phase at ex-Model C schools in Pietermaritzburg

Dear Ms Padayachee,

Full Approval – Expedited

In response to your application dated 07 June 2013, the Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol have been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number.

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

The ethical clearance certificate is only valid for a period of 3 years from the date of issue. Thereafter Recertification must be applied for on an annual basis.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)

/ms

cc Supervisor: Ms Phindile Mayaba
cc Academic Leader Research: Professor Doug Wassenaar
cc School Administrator: Mr Sbonele Duma

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

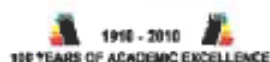
Dr Shenuka Singh (Chair)

Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building

Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000

Telephone: +27 (0) 31 260 3587/83504557 Facsimile: +27 (0) 31 260 4806 Email: ximbeo@ukzn.ac.za / snymanm@ukzn.ac.za / mphuno@ukzn.ac.za

Website: www.ukzn.ac.za



Founding Campuses: Edgewood Howard College Medical School Pietermaritzburg Westville

Appendix 2: Semi-structured interview

1. If you have been teaching since the end of apartheid, can you describe the changes that you have seen in your school? In terms of the demographics and development of the school
2. Can you describe the demographics of your current form class? E.g. their ages, gender and race
3. How many of the children within your class are second-language English speakers?
4. What are these respective learners' home languages?
5. Do you allow the learners to speak in their home language during class discussions or group work?
6. Can you rate the English proficiency amongst the second-language speakers as compared to their English-speaking peers?
7. Are you able to speak any language besides for English? And if so, how would you rate your proficiency in those languages?
8. Do you think language forms a barrier to learning for learners who are second-language speakers? And if so, how?
9. Do you think that language diversity within your class forms a barrier to learning and teaching for yourself and your learners? If so, how?
10. Can you describe the teaching methodologies you use? Of these methodologies which do you find most effective especially for those who are second-language speakers?
11. If a second-language child in your class, e.g. an isiZulu is unable to understand a maths concept, despite several attempts? How do you intervene?
12. Do you find that second-language speakers are able to communicate more effectively through talking as compared to written work? If so, Please give me some examples of such cases?
13. Do you find that linguistic diversity amongst the learners compromises the assessment of their performance at school? How are these learners assessed as compared to English speakers?
14. Do you think that teaching learners in a second language provides them with an opportunity to expand their knowledge and vocabulary in that language?

15. Do you feel that your pre-service training sufficiently equipped you for addressing linguistic challenges within the classroom?
16. Does your school offer learner support for children who have language barriers to learning? And if so, can you describe these intervention strategies?
17. Do you think that the intervention of other professionals such as speech therapists at your school would alleviate the barriers that learners face regarding? If so, how?

Appendix 3: Information Letter to the participants



University of KwaZulu Natal
Discipline of Psychology
Private Bag x01
Scottsville
3209

7 August 2013

Dear Participant

My name is Mayure Padayachee and I am currently a Psychology student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg Campus. As part of my Masters Research project for 2013, I will be conducting a study entitled “Exploring Educators’ Perceptions of the Challenges Facing Second-Language Learners within the Foundation Phase at ex-Model C Schools in Pietermaritzburg”.

The study aims to explore linguistic diversity in the classrooms and highlight the perceptions of the educators who are responsible for the education of second language learners. The current system demands that schools should be able to identify all learners who experience language barriers to learning, and assist them, by suitably accommodating to their specific needs. However, these expectations are challenging and require further learner support strategies that are often beyond the speciality of educators and capacity of the schools.

This presents the dilemma that drives my research project which aims to investigate the needs of second-language learners, from the perspective of educators, and thereafter present suggestions of how these learners could possibly be assisted to learn effectively and reach their optimal level of academic performance.

This letter is to request your permission to participate in this study. Participation will involve engaging in an interview with me, the researcher, which will take approximately 60 minutes. Please be assured that the identity of your school, the principal and yourself will be treated with confidentiality. You are not coerced to partake in this study, if you are willing, then I would request your written consent. Should you feel uncomfortable at any point during the research process, you have the right to withdraw from the study without any penalties.

There are no direct benefits to you participating in this study, however, you, as educators, and the education system at large may benefit from the findings of the study. There are also no costs to you for participating. The study foresees no harm – whether physical, emotional or psychological – implicated towards you; and there will not be any form of deception used during the research.

On your request, a summary of the findings will be presented to you via email once the research project has been concluded and submitted. The data collected for this study might be used for future research, for this your permission is requested.

I would be most grateful if you could be of assistance to me. Your participation in this research study would be most valuable as you would also be able to identify the challenges faced within your school, and be given the opportunity to address them whilst assisting in the research done within the topic at large.

If you have any questions that you would like to ask, you are welcome to contact me, the researcher, by using the details at the bottom of the page. If you have any questions you may also contact my supervisor, Ms. P. Mayaba, via telephone or via email. If you have any complaints about this study you may contact Ms. Phume Ximba of the Humanities and Social Science Research Ethics Committee via phone (031) 260 3587 or email ximbap@ukzn.ac.za.

Kind regards,

Mayure Padayachee
(Researcher, Masters Student)

Cellphone: 076 203 2002

Telephone: 033 260 5364

Email: mayure.padayachee@gmail.com

Ms. Phindile Mayaba

(Lecturer and Research Project Supervisor)

Telephone: 033 260 5364

Email: mayabap@ukzn.ac.za

Appendix 4: Informed Consent Form

I.....

Hereby consent to the following in my participation in the study entitled, **“Exploring Educators’ Perceptions of the Challenges Facing Second-Language Learners within the Foundation Phase at ex-Model C Schools in Pietermaritzburg”** conducted by Mayure Padayachee.

1. I agree to participate in this study of my own free will.
2. I have no obligation to this study and may withdraw at any given time with no negative consequences.
3. I understand that throughout this study I will remain anonymous and that I have an agreement of confidentiality between myself and the researcher.
4. I give the respective researcher full consent to use my data in future studies that may be conducted.

Participant’s signature:

Researcher’s signature:

Date:

----- **Tear Off Here** -----

I,

Hereby consent to the audio recording of the interview as I participate in the study entitled, **“Exploring Educators’ Perceptions of the Challenges Facing Second-Language Learners within the Foundation Phase at ex-Model C Schools in Pietermaritzburg”** conducted by Mayure Padayachee.

Participant’s signature:

Researcher’s signature:

Appendix 5: Letter to the Principal

University of KwaZulu- Natal
Discipline of Psychology
Private Bag x01
Scottsville
3209

7 August 2013

Dear Sir/ Madam,

My name is Mayure Padayachee and I am currently a Psychology student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg Campus.

As part of my Masters Research project for 2013, I will be conducting a study entitled “Exploring Educators’ Perceptions of the Challenges Facing Second-Language Learners within the Foundation Phase at ex-Model C Schools in Pietermaritzburg”.

The study aims to explore linguistic diversity in the classrooms and highlight the perceptions of the educators who are responsible for the education of second language learners. The current system demands that schools should be able to identify all learners who experience language barriers to learning, and assist them, by suitably accommodating to their specific needs. However, these expectations are challenging and require further learner support strategies that are often beyond the speciality of educators and capacity of the schools.

This presents the dilemma that drives my research project which aims to investigate the needs of second-language learners, from the perspective of educators, and thereafter present suggestions of how these learners could possibly be assisted to learn effectively and reach their optimal level of academic performance.

This letter is to request your permission to attend a staff meeting, to potentially meet your Junior Primary teachers who may be interested in volunteering to participate in my study. Furthermore, I would also like your permission to possibly spend a day observing the participants during their school hours, to gauge more information and conduct interviews. Please be assured that the identity of your school, the principal and all participants will be treated with confidentiality.

I would be most grateful if you could be of assistance to me. Your participation in this research study would be most valuable as you would also be able to identify the challenges faced within your school, and be given the opportunity to address them whilst assisting in the research done within the topic at large.

If you have any questions that you would like to ask, you are welcome to contact me, the researcher, by using the details at the bottom of the page. If you have any questions you may also contact my supervisor, Ms. P. Mayaba, via telephone or via email. If you have any complaints about this study you may contact Ms. Phume Ximba of the Humanities and Social Science Research Ethics Committee via phone (031) 260 3587 or email ximbap@ukzn.ac.za.

Kind regards,

Mayure Padayachee
(Researcher, Masters Student)
Cellphone: 076 203 2002
Email: mayure.padayachee@gmail.com

Ms. Phindile Mayaba
(Lecturer and Research Supervisor)
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Appendix 6: Turnitin originality report

Thesis			
ORIGINALITY REPORT			
5%	4%	2%	1%
SIMILARITY INDEX	INTERNET SOURCES	PUBLICATIONS	STUDENT PAPERS
PRIMARY SOURCES			
1	Submitted to University of KwaZulu-Natal Student Paper	<1 %	
2	Submitted to Western Governors University Student Paper	<1 %	
3	uir.unisa.ac.za Internet Source	<1 %	
4	Margie Probyn. "Language and Learning Science in South Africa", Language and Education, 09/15/2006 Publication	<1 %	
5	Rudwick, Stephanie. "'Zulu, we need [it] for our culture': Umlazi adolescents in the post-apartheid state 'Zulu, we need [it] for our culture': Umlazi adolescents in the post-apartheid state", Southern African Linguistics and Applied Language Studies, 2004. Publication	<1 %	
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